ELOISE DE MONTBLANC.

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DE

MONTBLANC.

A

NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES

"Inured to ſorrow from her tender years,
"Her parents' aſhes drank her early tears."

SAPPHO TO PHAON.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE.
AT THE
Minerva-Preſs
LEADENHALL-STREET.

M.DCC.XCVI.

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ELOISE DE MONTBLANC.

CHAP. I.

I HAVE now trod the wide field of imagination through two volumes, and am beginning the third.

In the preceding chapter we left our hero in a perilous ſituation, about to meet an enemy who might blow out his brains, or vice

verſa. Duelling he thought was not a way in which men ſhould ſettle quarrels, but it was the only method now purſued, and therefore he muſt accede to it or have his name branded for a coward; he wiſhed the laws were ſuch, that no one might fight a duel unleſs one of them dropt, and then it would prevent them from engaging in the field of honour about every trifling difference, and only when a man's feelings were ſo deeply wounded that he wiſhed to take away the life of the being who had wounded them, or die himſelf in the cauſe; and it would likewiſe prevent the dangers and diſaſters accruing from young hot-headed men meeting to ſettle ridiculous punctilios of honour.

But I have involuntarily got into the labyrinth of argument, and ſcarcely know how to extricate myſelf; and I muſt entreat my reader to excuſe me from at preſent attending Sir Auguſtus in the field, but quietly ſeat myſelf in the chamber of my fair Francoiſe.

The

The next morning Eloiſe did not ariſe from her bed till ten o'clock, the fatigues of the preceding evening rendered her unuſually pale and languid, and ſhe felt herſelf uncommonly depreſſed; ſhe reſolved to ſhake it off, and therefore took a turn on the terrace; but though the beautiful ſcene around engaged her attention, it did not diſſipate her depreſſion.

She had not, however, walked long e'er Lady Caſtle Fern beckened to her from the window, and ſhe haſtened into the parlour.

"How does my dear Eloiſe do?" ſaid Lady Caſtle Fern, "after the adventures of the evening."

"Very well, I thank you," replied Eloiſe, "but I aſſure you I met with very few adventures."

"Why ſurely, my dear, you call the fortune-teller one. I have been told a curious circumſtance of an old man paying compliments to another Savoyard in the ſame dreſs

as your's, but when he found out his miſtake, he purſued you from room to room. I ſuppoſe at leaſt you have made a conqueſt of his heart, and his declarations I hope, will ſoon follow."

"Upon my honour," replied Eloiſe colouring, "you ſeem as well acquainted with the maſquerade as if you had been there.—I aſſure you the ſoothſayer, (for him you moſt certainly mean) took no particular notice of me, and if he did ce'ſt m'eſt tout un, I am perfectly indifferent about him, and as for offers, you know one does not expect them, after only one interview, and that even in diſguiſe; but admitting he was to lay his heart and its appendages at my feet, I ſhould beg the gentleman to take them back again, as being unworthy to poſſeſs what I could not make any return for."

While this converſation was paſſing, Eloiſe's colour alternately underwent a change, though ſhe knew not why, ſhe almoſt accuſed herſelf of inconſtancy towards Auguſtus,

Auguſtus, in being ſo charmed and pleaſed with the old fortune-teller; but we generally make uſe of the ſophiſtry that ſuits us beſt, and ſhe agreed it in her mind, that ſhe admired the ſtranger, becauſe he ſpoke ſo feelingly of Auguſtus, and having thus ſettled it, ſhe determined it ſhould give her no further uneaſineſs.

The breakfaſt paſſed in numerous queſtions on the part of Lady Caſtle Fern, and anſwers in monyſyllables on that of Eloiſe; ſhe had endeavoured to converſe, and give an account of the maſquerade, but found herſelf unable to do it, and, therefore, as it was a fruitleſs attempt, ſhe contented herſelf with only giving anſwers to thoſe inquiſitory queſtions her benefactreſs choſe to put to her.

"Eloiſe," ſaid Lady Caſtle Fern, "to-day you ſeem very much fatigued, my dear, and, therefore, to-morrow you will give us a much better account of the entertainment, and then

too Auguſtus will moſt likely be returned from Mr. Wharton's."

Her heart ſickened at the name of Auguſtus, though ſhe could not account for it, and a preſcience of ſomething horrible followed her wherever ſhe went. As ſoon as breakfaſt was taken away, ſhe retired to her room under pretence of putting by her maſquerade dreſs, but in reality to enjoy the reflections of a diſturbed imagination.

It may now ſeem right to inform the reader how Lady Caſtle Fern became ſo well acquainted with Eloiſe's adventures. Mrs. Bridget had, on the night of the maſquerade, as ſoon as ſhe had dreſſed her, attended Mrs. Jeffard's levee at Rawdon-Park; the ſtrict injunctions of ſecrecy given by Lady Elizabeth to her Abigail were ſo far adhered to, that ſhe concealed the name of her miſtreſs, and likewiſe that of Sir Auguſtus from Mrs. Bridget, and only told the circumſtances that befel them, with additions and corrections of her own; from

from her, then, it was retailed to Lady Caſtle Fern the next morning while ſhe was dreſſing her;—but I muſt now return to my heroine.

When ſhe retired to her dreſſing-room ſhe took up a volume of her favourite Petrarch; far from now amuſing her, it diſguſted, the ſcenes ſhe had ſo often read, now faded from her imagination; and the vivid fancy, ſo truly elegant, became dull and heavy; at length ſhe threw it aſide and drew her chair to the window.

Nothing was to be ſeen but the lofty waving oaks, which ſeemed to nod aſſent to the melancholy of her preſent diſpoſition, or a ſtraggling mortal whom buſineſs or curioſity brought up the chalky hill to the caſtle.

After ſome time ſhe was wearied even with the proſpect before her, and ceaſing to look on it with pleaſure, ſhe fell into a kind of painful torpor, inſpired by melancholy

ideas; ſoon, however, ſhe was rouſed from her apathy by the ſound of the trampling of horſes, ſhe looked up, all was hid from her by the thickneſs of the foliage, at laſt, in a break between the trees, ſhe caught a view of the horſeman, and perceived it to be Sir Auguſtus Caſtle Fern's groom leading his maſter's hunter; the firſt idea that occurred to her was, that he was thrown from his horſe, and, agitated beyond deſcription, ſhe almoſt flew down ſtairs, and met the groom juſt as he entered the caſtle.

"For God's ſake William, what is the matter?" ſaid ſhe, almoſt out of breath.

"Matter, Miſs! why Lord, nothing to be ſure, Miſs, what ſhould be the matter, Miſs?"

"That's what I wiſh to know; has any thing happened to your maſter, is he thrown from his horſe? for heaven's ſake tell me."

Lord, Miſs, don't put yourſelf into ſuch a terrification, why you ſeems all in a trimble, I am ſure maſter has'nt fallen from his horſe."

Scarcely

Scarcely convinced, though the groom had aſſured her no accident had befallen him, with ſuch a plauſible face, that to controvert what he ſaid was impoſſible, ſhe determined not to make Lady Caſtle Fern a participator of her uneaſineſs, and therefore, returned to her own room, flattering herſelf ſhe was compoſed, and compartively eaſy.

Mournfully, however, ſhe ſat the remainder of the morning, and when ſummoned to dinner ſhe trembled ſo violently with agitation as ſhe deſcended the ſtairs that ſhe was obliged to keep faſt hold on the balluſtrades to prevent her from falling; ſhe found Lady Caſtle Fern very uneaſy, for the loquacious Mrs. Bridget had been to tell her the groom had returned with the horſes without Sir Auguſtus, and as he was gone before Lady Caſtle Fern knew of his being there, ſhe had ſent all the ſervants in ſearch of her ſon.

Eloiſe found it impoſſible to give that hope to Lady Caſtle Fern ſhe was not herſelf ani-

mated with, and as ſhe had not any ſalutary conſolation to give, ſhe forebore to waſte her breath with common place arguments, which ſhe knew never mitigated grief.

Dinner paſſed in ſilence, melancholy reflections were preferred to eating, and it went off in nearly the ſame ſtate in which it was ſat on the table.

In the mean time Sir Auguſtus had only waited on the heath a few minutes before he ſaw his antagoniſt approach, and no ſooner did he look at him than he perceived he was a ſchool-fellow, though he had had no acquaintance with him ſince he left Eton. He was now a cornet of horſe, and quartered at Derby.

The ſeconds having meaſured the ground, and the uſual preliminaries taken place, they proceeded to action, Auguſtus fired firſt, the ball whizzed over his enemy's head; Mr. Burrows then fired, and miſſed his aim likewiſe.

Had

Had it been his own ſame Sir Auguſtus was fighting in vindication of, one ſhot he would have thought ſufficient; but not ſo with the fair, the unimpeachable character of the innocent Eloiſe; once more, then, he fired unſucceſsfully, but his antagoniſt's unerring ſhot, perforated the ſleeve of his coat, and lodged in his arm. From the pain and loſs of blood he fell to the ground.

"Burrrows," ſaid he, generouſly extending his hand, *now* we are friends, I hope I have convinced you I have not riſked my life in defence of the virtue of my *miſtreſs*; and you have convinced me you are no coward."

A reconciliation then took place, and Auguſtus, who felt himſelf more wounded than he at firſt thought, adviſed him to make his way to London till the reſult was known.

Mr. Burrows, truly aſhamed of his behaviour, and which was the effect of living in faſhionable circles, where the coquetry of ſo

many women juſtify the remarks he had made on Eloiſe, and where the general opinion of the gentlemen is, that all women are coquettes; a habit he had got of ſpeaking ill of *every* woman, had unfortunately, from the ſtory circulated by Fitzerrington, cauſed Eloiſe to come under the laſh of the tongue of ſcandal.

He, after apologizing to Sir Auguſtus for the affront he had offered him, took his advice and ſet off for London.

Sir Auguſtus's arm being looked at by Mr. James, proved to have received a dangerous wound, and he was now, from loſs of blood, totally inſenſible, he was therefore conveyed on a hurdle they had brought, to the firſt cottage that preſented itſelf. The honeſt owners of it, with all the activity of ſolicitude, prepared their beſt bed for him, which he was immediately laid on, and ſoon after, returning life appeared.

Rycroft

Bycroft was now obliged to leave him to ſet off for Portſmouth, where he ought to have been ſome days before, but the temptation of the maſquerade he could not reſiſt, and had meant to have ſet off e'er day that morning, but his friend entreating him to act as his ſecond, he complied; he was now therefore obliged to attend his ſhip, which was under ſailing orders.

Auguſtus now began to conſider in what manner to let his mother know where he was, and likewiſe in ſuch a way as not to alarm her; to ſend a verbal information he knew would terrify her, and as it was his left arm that was wounded, he determined to write a ſhort note.

He therefore inquired for pen, ink and paper, but the good people of the cottage could neither read nor write, and conſequently had no apparatus, and for that purpoſe the groom was ſent privately to the caſtle; where Sir Auguſtus had carefully inſtructed him not, on

on any conſideration, to ſay any thing of the duel if he was met by any of his fellow domeſtic's, and he performed his embaſſy as has been ſeen, without tranſgreſſing theſe reſtrictions, even to the minute inquiries of Eloiſe, whoſe ſolicitation was evidently exemplified in her agitation regarding his ſafety.

The groom on his return did not fail to communicate to his maſter her terrors, leſt he had fallen from his horſe, with the exaggerations which a ſtory generally acquires by telling.

"And did ſhe," ſighed Auguſtus as he was ſupported in the bed by pillows, with the pen in his hand juſt going to write, "intereſt herſelf in my fate? now valuable to me indeed, from poſſeſſing a thought in her boſom. Now! indeed Eloiſe, all the trouble of thy devoted Auguſtus is repaid, and in this paltry wound, I acknowledge what has reſtored tranquillity, and even tranſport to my ſoul, in knowing that you ſometimes think

of

of me. My happineſs would indeed be compleat if I could for ever call you mine, as the wife of Auguſtus Caſtle Fern you would be far removed from the ſlander, that as Eloiſe de Montblanc you will ever be ſubject to, at leaſt while you poſſeſs ſo ſuperior a mind and perſon to the reſt of your ſex."

He now wrote as cheerful a note as his agitated ſpirits could aſſume, informing his mother that his wound was a trifling one, and that he hoped to be able to return to the caſtle in a day or two at furtheſt, he then lay down to compoſe his agitated thoughts, which were divided between his love for Eloiſe and the recollection of the field of honour, where, for her dear ſake he received his wound. While he was enjoying theſe reflections the groom mounted his horſe, and ſoon arrived at the caſtle.

A ſmall event has a great effect on the lower claſs of people; ſome of the men ſervants having been diſpatched in ſearch of

Auguſtus, had conveyed an alarm to the remaining ones; a degree of myſtery hung about them, and ſignificant nods and geſtures though none of them knew what they meant, were all the anſwers they returned to each other's queſtions. When, therefore, the groom came into the ſervant's-hall where they were all ſitting, they concluded by his melancholy countenance, that Sir Auguſtus had either cut his throat or drowned himſelf for love, for they ſuppoſed a deſperado never committed ſo raſh an action but from croſſes in that paſſion.

The groom who had now received no prohibition to diſcloſe the adventure, told it in the glowing fancy of his warm imagination, ſetting forth his maſter's courage, and alſo the hideous wound he had received.

"Lord bleſs his honor," ſaid the tender-hearted William, wiping away a falling tear, I hope his wound a'nt mortal, though I did

hear

hear the doctor ſay he feared it muſt be amputated; now dub me for a fool in horſe-fleſh, if I don't like him as well as Sprightly, the horſe I rides, and as one may ſay, it's natural to one.

After this converſation, ſo feelingly given by the groom, Mrs. Bridget was voted by all the reſt to be the proper perſon to carry the note to Lady Caſtle Fern, who was then in her dreſſing room, ſtraining her anxious eyes beyond the park-paling, in hopes of ſeeing the dear, the much ſought object of her uneaſineſs.

Mrs. Bridget thought it would be killing two birds with one ſtone, if ſhe was firſt to go and inform Eloiſe of the adventure, and therefore, inſtead of turning to the left, ſhe walked ſtraight through the gallery to her apartment, where ſhe ſurpriſed her ſitting in a penſive mood, "while brooding care preſſed heavy on her boſom," ſhe juſt lifted up her head on hearing the door open. "What is

the

the matter?" inquired ſhe, obſerving that Bridget was ready to burſt with ſome event.

"Enough's the matter I aſſure you, Miſs Eloiſe, I dare ſay we ſhall all have to go in mourning,—The ſecond *Hatch*'ment we have had in the front of the caſtle within two years, for father and ſon."

"For God's ſake what has happened?" again aſked Eloiſe, in an agony of fear not to be conceived.

"Why Miſs, Sir Auguſtus is killed in a duel by an officer, at leaſt if he is not dead, he has got a mortal wound, and I dare ſay he will die, or have his arm cut off, and then what will life be to him, ſuch a beautiful young gentleman as he was, without his limbs, why nobody will marry him, ſo maimed and wounded; I am ſure, Miſs Eloiſe, if I was you, I would not marry a man without his arms."

Mrs Bridget might have talked in the ſame ſtrain an hour longer without meeting any interruption from Eloiſe; for as ſoon as ſhe

heard the horrid words that "Sir Auguſtus was killed in a duel," all recollection vaniſhed, the objects flitted before her dizzy ſight, and ſhe threw herſelf back in her chair in ſtrong convulſions.

"Good God of Heaven! what have I done?" exclaimed the terrified Abigail, "Oh! I have killed Miſs Montblanc."

She then began to apply her force to the bell, ſcreaming at the ſame time for help.

Lady Caſtle Fern, who had heard the noiſe, came to inquire the cauſe of it.

"My God! what has happened to Eloiſe, that I ſee her in this condition, what have you done to her, Bridget?"

"Lord, me done, my Lady, why nothing; I only told her that Sir Auguſtus was almoſt murdered in a duel, my lady, and ſo ſhe went right off into theſe fits."

"Almighty

"Almighty Father!" ſaid Lady Caſtle Fern, "this is more than I can bear," claſping her hands together in an agony of grief, and almoſt ſcreaming with terror.

She was now in a worſe ſtate than Eloiſe, for ſhe retained her reaſon to a ſenſe of her wretchedneſs, while Eloiſe's was loſt to all knowledge of her ſituation.

"Oh! my lady, for heaven's ſake don't take on ſo, here is the note Sir Auguſtus has written himſelf."

"I have not courage to read it," ſaid ſhe, puſhing it from her as Bridget preſented it, and who now was as ſolicitous to heal as ſhe had been before to wound. By her perſuaſion, after ſome time, Lady Caſtle Fern was prevailed on to read the note, and though (but in a ſmall degree) it ſpoke comfort to her tortured feelings.

Yet though it was penned in a cheerful ſtyle, ſhe perceived it was written under weakneſs

weakneſs and agitation; and that alarmed her for the ſafety of him ſhe adored.

It was now eight o'clock in the evening, and Eloiſe ſtill continued in ſtrong convulſions. Mrs. Bridget, after telling the melancholy event to the groom, begged he would fetch the doctor, as ſhe ſtiled Mr. James, for ſhe feared every inſtant ſhe would breathe her laſt, and therefore entreated him to loſe no time.

He mounted his horſe immediately, and rode to his houſe, where he heard the mortifying intelligence that he was from home, but by dint of minute inquiries from his apprentice, he learned that he believed he was then gone to attend Sir Auguſtus, and ſpurring his horſe he found himſelf at the cottage in leſs than ten minutes.

"Oh! Mr. James," ſaid the unthinking groom, "I have been hunting you this ever ſo long, you muſt go to the caſtle this inſtant, for

for there's poor Miſs Eloiſe in ſtrong convulſions.

Sir Anguſtus, who lay dozing, ſtarted up, "is Eloiſe in convulſions," ſaid he, "what has thrown her into them?"

"Why Sir, that fool, Mrs. Bridget, went and told her as how you was murdered in a duel."

"And ſo friend," ſaid Mr. James, "you pluck the mote from thy brother's eye, and remembereth not the beam in thine own; ſee what you have done by your haſte, and you know haſte makes waſte, and ſo you have waſted all the good I have been doing your maſter, by your haſte and inconſideration."

"For God's ſake go directly Sir," ſaid Auguſtus, "even while you talk perhaps Eloiſe is breathing her laſt, and I the cauſe of it."——Here he threw himſelf back in an agony of deſpair.

Mr. James proceeded as faſt as his little poney would go, to Beſborough-Caſtle, after giving

giving ſtrict injunctions to the groom to keep his maſter quiet; he found the inhabitants of the caſtle in much the ſame ſituation as the groom had left them, except that Eloiſe, by the aſſiſtance of Lady Caſtle Fern and Bridget, had been put to bed.

She was ſtill in convulſions, her burning hands were thrown on the counterpane, every nerve of them was convulſed, her temples were throbbing with a violent motion, and her lovely face was now diſtorted.

Lady Caſtle Fern, in the mother, for ſome moments forgot her dear Protegeé.—"How is Auguſtus, Mr. James," ſaid ſhe anxiouſly, "are his wounds dangerous."

"By Jove, my Lady, 'tis thus and no nearer,—touch and go is a good pilot; if the ball had gone a barley-corn further, the univerſe could not have ſaved your ſon."

Oh! be merciful Heaven!" replied ſhe, "bear me to him, I will go immediately and ſee him."

"Reaſon

"Reaſon in roaſting of eggs, my lady, your ſon will not die to-night, and to let him ſee either yourſelf or any of the domeſtics beſides the groom, would only agitate him, and bring on a fever, which is what I wiſh to avoid."

However, it may be ſeen there was little reaſon in Mr. James, when his love of quotation ſuperceded his exerciſe of philanthropy; for although this mixer of medicines poſſeſſed a larger ſhare than in general falls to the lot of man, ſuch was the force of habit, that he forgot the ſufferings of Eloiſe, or that it was the purpoſe that brought him to the caſtle, till reminded by Lady Caſtle Fern to accompany her to her room, where he found her in a ſtate of weakneſs, ſuch as had been occaſioned by extreme agitation.

"I will ſend her madam," ſaid he, "a *compoſing, ſoporific, invigorating* draught, and let her have wine to recruit her, "wine which maketh glad the heart of man," and

then

then to-morrow I hope I ſhall be able to give a better account of both my invalids."

He then took his leave, and Lady Caſtle Fern divided her melancholy time between prayer for the ſufferings of her ſon, and ſolicitude for Eloiſe, who was now not ſo much agitated, but ſtill totally inſenſible. By midnight, ſhe, however, became more calm,—the traces of ſomething horrible were on her mind, though ſhe could not tell what they were,—it remained like an unpleaſant illuſion, till Lady Caſtle Fern kindly retold the circumſtances to her in terms leſs ſhocking and with more truth than Mrs. Bridget, and after endeavouring to render her compoſed, ſhe retired worn down by ſorrow to her chamber, and by Eloiſe's deſire Mrs. Bridget was diſmiſſed, while ſhe relieved a little from grief and agitation by a ſhower of tears, fell into an unpleaſant dozing.

CHAP. II.

IN the mean time Sir Auguſtus was ſo agitated by uneaſineſs for Eloiſe, and ſuffering from the pain of his wound, that ſleep was a ſtranger to his eyes, that gave way to a reſtleſsneſs till towards morning, when he fell into a ſtupor for about half an hour, but awoke in all the horror of cauſing Eloiſe's death, of which he had been dreaming, and a train of ideas about her illneſs, too poignant for language to do juſtice to, follow-

ed

ed; and what were the reſolves of theſe meditations we ſhall ſhortly ſee.

His ſervant, who had only lain down in his cloaths on a mattraſs that had been brought into the room for the purpoſe, he now ſummoned to his bedſide. William with alacrity obeyed.

Sir Auguſtus then raiſed himſelf upright, and ſupported by pillows he thus began.

"William, will you be faithful to me?

"That I will your honour, to the laſt drop of my blood."

"You muſt not ſuffer" continued Sir Auguſtus, "what I am going to ſay to you to be known to any one, if you do, you forfeit my eſteem for ever; but if you will do me the ſervice I now require of you without diſcloſing it, you will for ever oblige me and fix me your friend."

William promiſed faithfully to do whatever he required.

He continued, "William, do you think if I was to dreſs myſelf, I could, with your aſſiſtance, walk to the caſtle? for the news I heard laſt night of Eloiſe's being ſo ill, makes me ſo miſerable, that unleſs I ſee her, I certainly ſhall not recover."

The groom, ſurpriſed at the oddity of the requeſt, was for ſome minutes irreſolute; that a man ſo weak that he fainted, a few hours before from loſs of blood, ſhould now think of walking to the caſtle, half a mile from the cottage where he was now lodged. Sir Auguſtus, who perceived his heſitation, repeated the queſtion.

When the ſimple groom, juſt then recollecting the old women's aſſertion, that "whatever a perſon fancied when they were ill, never did them any harm," acquieſced in attending

attending his maſter, without expoſtulating on the impropriety of his venturing out.

Sir Auguſtus, aſſiſted by William, then proceeded to dreſs himſelf, but before he had finiſhed the taſk he fainted away with the exertion; his ardour was not damped by his weakneſs, and when he was dreſſed he began his painful journey,—his arm with moving, was in violent agony, and though almoſt carried by his ſervant, he was obliged ſeveral times to halt before he arrived at the caſtle; but reſolutely determined to proceed, love and affection triumphed over pain, and weakneſs was made the victim to reſolution.

In an hour he reached the caſtle,—it was now eight o'clock, and the confuſion the houſe had been in till ſuch a late hour the preceding evening, prevented moſt of the domeſtic's from being at their accuſtomed avocations. Sir Auguſtus ſtopped at the lodge while his ſervant went to reconnoitre in what part of the houſe the ſervants were,

and fortunately found that his maſter might, through the private door, paſs to his room unobſerved.

Anthony, in the mean time, had with all the garrulity of old age, been telling Sir Auguſtus how many people he had known die from leaving their beds too ſoon, when they were ill; but it had no ther effect on him than to excite a ſmile, when he reflected how very acceptable ſuch doctrine would be to many people in his ſituation.

To his ſtudy they now proceeded, and Sir Auguſtus ordered Mrs. Bridget to be fetched. In a few minutes the groom returned uſhering in the waiting woman, who gave a violent ſtart on ſeeing Sir Auguſtus.

"Bridget, is Eloiſe awake yet?"

She replied in the affirmative.

"How does ſhe do this morning?"

"Better, thank god," replied Bridget, "though her face is as white as my apron."

"He

He ſighed,———"Do you think ſhe would ſee me?"

"Yes, that ſhe will, ſir."

"Then" ſaid Auguſtus give my love to her, and tell her, if ſhe is able, and if ſhe values my happineſs, I beg to ſee her for a moment."

Then enjoining her to ſecrecy by a bribe, he ſent her to deliver the meſſage which ſhe did verbatim.

"If I am able!" ſaid Eloiſe, ſpringing up, "yes, if I was drawing my laſt breath to a cloſe I would be able to ſee him, and even if I was ſure of paying the price of my imprudence with my life."

In a quarter of an hour ſhe had riſen, and ſlipped on her dreſſing-gown, and almoſt carried down by Mrs. Bridget, ſhe arrived at the door;—ſhe ſtopt a minute to recover herſelf, and to acquire reſolution to meet Sir Auguſtus. With a tremulous hand ſhe open-

ed the door.—Sir Auguſtus, happy beyond deſcription, forgetting his wound, ruſhed into the middle of the room and caught her in his arms, when preſſing her to his boſom,—"Tell me," ſaid he, "my firſt, my only love, if you are better, and I die contented."

The change of her countenance expreſſed more forcibly than words could have done, her aſtoniſhment, and he in a faint voice continued.

"Oh! Eloiſe, what tranſport would it be to die if I was aſſured of being beloved by you.—Tell me, have you any other ſentiment for me than cold, phlegmatic, friendſhip?—Tell me I am not indifferent to you, and I ſhall be happy; alaſs! deareſt Eloiſe, if you knew how I adore you, your pity at leaſt would be excited."

Eloiſe could only liſten and weep, but on looking up ſaw the blood ſtreaming from his wound, and thought on his pale countenance ſhe ſaw the lines of death, and with

with a conviction of his immediate danger, with an expreſſion of unutterable anguiſh, a ſlight convulſion ſeized her, and ſhe ſunk ſenſeleſs in her chair.

Sir Auguſtus ſcreamed with terror at ſeeing the ſituation of Eloiſe; love lent him reſolution and he endeavoured to reach the bell, ere, while he was attempting to raiſe her, ſhe ſhould expire.

His wound bled afreſh in an increaſing ſtream, and he was nearly exhauſted when Mrs. Bridget, whoſe curioſity had brought her to the door to liſten, entered the room. Bridget, whoſe judgment was at all times weak, was at that moment incapable of exerciſing the little ſhe ever poſſeſſed, and inſtead of lending her required aſſiſtance, ran out of the room vociferouſly calling, Sir Auguſtus would die.—While the only perſon with whom caution was neceſſary, was, unfortunately, firſt to hear her, for Lady Caſtle Fern, who was anxiouſly watching

every little noiſe, and fearing ſomething even more dreadful than the ſituation her ſon was in, ran into the room. To delineate her countenance at that moment, is an impoſſibility my feeble pen cannot do juſtice to,—a mother, where ſpeech was ſuſpended by agony, and whoſe evety faculty ſeemed to beſpeak immediate annihilation, ſaw her ſon lay nearly ſenſeleſs, while a ſcene that her foreboding heart told her *would* arrive from the appearance of Eloiſe and Sir Auguſtus, beſpoke the fatal certainty that it *had* paſt, and which, although ſhe ſupinely ſaw from day to day the advancement of, ſhe had not reſolution to interdict.

Sir Auguſtus was now ſo weak and exhauſted, that he could only feebly extend his trembling hand to her, and with a voice ſcarcely to be heard, hoped ſhe would forgive the alarm he had occaſioned her.

The ſervants, after carrying him to his room, and putting him into his bed, ran in different

different directions to find Mr. James, who one of them met on his way to the caſtle, and who now approached his patient's bed. A ſtyptic was immediately applied, and in a ſhort time the blood was ſtaunched, though it left him ſo low and weak, that life ſeemed to have almoſt forſaken his frame, and except a languid pulſation, all appearance of animation was gone. Mr. James, who ſaid every thing depended on his chamber being kept profoundly quiet, left it with Lady Caſtle Fern to return to the room where the ſcene I have juſt deſcribed had paſſed, and where Eloiſe had remained in a corner of it more dead than alive.

" Pray, my good lady," ſaid he, " how is all this? I left my patient in the cottage ſafely perched, and this morning the bird was flown."

Lady Caſtle Fern, turning her inquiring eyes on Eloiſe, ſeemed to expect ſome reaſon aſſigned by her for the confuſion they had

been put in, and the malaprop doctor, not obſerving the bluſh that ſuffuſed the pale cheek of Eloiſe, continued. "Why the error, I dare ſay, my dear madam, was in the firſt concoction, Mahomet, I ſuppoſe would not go to the mountain, ſo the mountain came to Mahomet: Is'nt it ſo mademoiſelle?"

While Eloiſe, ſcorning the meanneſs of deſcending to a falſehood, wanted all the cheering the love of Auguſtus had given her, to ſupport her to reach her room, where the Æſculapian diſciple urged her to go immediately to bed, and which, although he aſſured her ſhe was in a high fever, ſhe ſtrenuouſly objected to, and over-ruled by her firmneſs, which proceeded from not keeping him in ſuch a moment of danger from Sir Auguſtus, he croſſed the gallery to his room, where Lady Caſtle Fern hung over her ſon in a paroxiſm of anguiſh he deemed very improper, as he, though ſtill ſpeechleſs, was perfectly ſenſible; but calmed by the aſſurance

ance he would not leave him till the family phyſician arrived, ſhe conſented to retire.

Eloiſe tottered to her dreſſing-room, and ſat down to reflect on the numerous events of a day not yet half paſt.—"Alaſs!" ſighed ſhe, "our happineſs is never compleat,—There was a time when the poſſeſſion of Sir Auguſtus's affection would bring joy to my heart,—and ſo it would now," ſighed ſhe, "if I knew he was out of danger; but while he lingers in pain his Eloiſe never can be happy.—But, if he recovers, what happineſs will be my lot!—almoſt too much for a heart, long unuſed to joy, to bear;—if my beloved mother could behold us, how would her heart exult, in ſeeing her child the wife of ſo amiable, ſo generous a man as Auguſtus; but I dare not truſt myſelf with the hope that ſuch happineſs will ever fall to the lot of Eloiſe; death, with his unerring ſcythe, may ere long cut the thread of life for ever."

A flood of tears now relieved her oppreſſed boſom, and ſoon after, a ſervant came to inform

form her that breakfaſt was ready, a meal, which, in her terror, ſhe had entirely forgotten, for no craving powers put her in mind of it.

She found Lady Caſtle Fern already in the breakfaſt-room; for ſome time ſhe forebore to aſk after Sir Auguſtus, but ſummoning to her aid all the courage ſhe was miſtreſs of, with a face covered with bluſhes, and a voice barely audible, ſhe inquired how he did.

"I hope he is better, my love," replied Lady Caſtle Fern, taking Eloiſe's hand.

Kindneſs has a very ſingular effect on the ſpirits when greatly depreſſed, and in general perverts its deſign by rendering them additionally low; for on this proof of Lady Caſtle Fern's tenderneſs ſhe burſt into tears. Her ever compaſſionate benefactreſs endeavoured to compoſe them, aſſuring her that Mr. James had flattered her there was no doubt of Sir Auguſtus recovering.

A ſervant was now rung for to take up a baſon of tea to his maſter.

Never did Eloiſe ſo much wiſh ſhe was the wife of Sir Auguſtus, than at the preſent moment, when by every little attention and care ſhe might pleaſe him, when her attendance upon him would not be marked by impropriety.—"Oh! ſoon ties human and divine will authorize my watching by him, to ſoothe by my attention the rugged bed of ſickneſs;" but alaſs, that was not the caſe, and ſhe ſaw a baſon of tea carried by a ſervant which ſhe would have renounced becoming an empreſs to have flown on the wings of love to him with.

Eloiſe found it was an effort againſt nature to eat, and ſhe retired after drinking a little tea, to her room, and Lady Caſtle Fern to her ſon's bedſide.

A long melancholy day paſſed heavily, in which Eloiſe went ſeveral times to the chamber

chamber door of Auguſtus, to liſten if ſhe could hear him ſpeak.—The night brought with it a fever; his face burned with heat, and his pulſe beat nearly double.—Lady Caſtle Fern inſiſted on paſſing the night in his chamber, though he entreated her not; but no perſuaſion could induce her to quit it when in ſuch danger, and when ſhe hoped to tranquillize and ſooth his ſpirits.

The little ſleep that Eloiſe got, was diſturbed by the horrors of her mind, for "fancy deluſive moſt where warmeſt wiſhes are" viſited her in dreadful viſions.—At ſix o'clock ſhe aroſe and went to the door of Auguſtus, ſhe liſtened, all was for ſome minutes quiet within the room, till at length ſhe heard ſome one ſpeak,—ſhe rapt gently at the door, and upon Lady Caſtle Fern's coming to it, ſhe inquired in a low voice how Sir Auguſtus did, though ſhe feared from her ſwolen eyes he was not better; Lady Caſtle Fern ſhook her head, "he is very bad." Tears choked her

her utterance, and ſhe left the room leſt her ſon ſhould hear her ſobs.

Eloiſe found it impoſſible to give her any conſolation, and caſting on her a look of diſtraction mingled with pity, ſhe once more retired to her room.—"An only ſon, and ſuch a ſon, to be ſnatched from her" ſaid Eloiſe, as ſhe threw herſelf on a chair overcome with grief, "Unfortunate woman! then indeed will your portion of woes be compleat."

The noiſe of the door opening rouſed her from her reverie, and before her ſtood Mrs. Bridget.

"How does Sir Auguſtus do" ſaid ſhe, "Miſs Eloiſe this morning?"

She ſhook her head.

"Why Lord Miſs, don't pray take on ſo about it, perhaps he'll recover, and if he don't

don't it will be ſome conſolation to know he died for your ſake."

"For my ſake!" ſaid Eloiſe ſtarting up.

"Yes, to be ſure, Miſs, ſomebody ſaid ſomething diſreſpectful of you, ſo he challenged him, that's what I hear."

"This is indeed more than I can bear.—noble-minded young man, that you ſhould receive your death in my defence, is a miſery I never thought of, and which I can never ſurvive.—Rather ſhould my fame have mouldered into diſhonour, than that Auguſtus ſhould loſe his life in defending it."———

Here tears choked her voice, and Mrs. Bridget took her leave, after planting another dagger in her agonizing boſom.

All day Sir Auguſtus lay between life and death, he was delirious, and raved and talked inceſſantly. Mr. James never left him an inſtant, and when the family phyſician, who had been ſent for, arrived, he could give no hopes of a recovery, his youth was the only chance

chance in his favour, and this was thought a ſlender one, till the next night, when a favourable criſis came on, and he aſſured Lady Caſtle Fern he had great hopes, the danger was paſt;—the houſe of ſorrow was in one inſtant become the houſe of joy.—Eloiſe ſcarcely knew any bounds, nor was Lady Caſtle Fern leſs happy, though her happineſs was more concealed, and chaſtened by age.

A calm and compoſed ſleep rendered Sir Auguſtus perfectly ſenſible, and the firſt perſon he inquired after was Eloiſe, who, gratified beyond deſcription, bewailed her ſituation that pointed out an impropriety in going immediately to him. Many kind and affectionate meſſages paſſed between them by means of Mrs. Bridget, who carried the ſhort billet-doux's each other ſent, and which was a taſk ſhe dearly loved, for ſhe fancied it was ſomething like intrigue, of which the femmes de chambres had told her of abroad, and as ſhe thought foreign manners and cuſtoms

and

infinitely ſuperior to ours, ſhe generally imitated them in all the little levities for which the French are ſo remarked, and though committing no actual crime, often diſguſted thoſe of her own nation by her frivolity.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

TIME, the great ſtrengthener and deſtroyer, brought returning vigour to Sir Auguſtus, his wounded arm was every day mending, and the phyſician foretold a ſpeedy recovery; though ſtill extremely weak, he was able to ſit up in his room for two or three hours every day, and Eloiſe had now the pleaſure, attended by Lady Caſtle Fern, of converſing with him, nor did ſhe ever leave him while it was proper ſhe ſhould remain. The world could

could not have produced two hearts more happy, more united than theirs. Auguſtus ſtill more and more in love with her, while ſhe returned it with gentleneſs, modeſty and affection.

The hours flew ſwiftly away, and it was already a week ſince Sir Auguſtus had received the wound; but ſince he had been recovering ſeemed but as a day.

One morning, when Lady Caſtle Fern had left the room, and they were entirely alone, "Eloiſe," ſaid Auguſtus, "but for the maſquerade, I ſhould never have known my happineſs of being beloved by you."

The reality now ſeemed to flaſh on her mind, and making no anſwer to what he ſaid, ſhe drew from her pocket the elegant lines given her by the flower-man, and put them into his hands. Auguſtus read them with attention, and aſſured her they were not his

his, but ſaid, "he was ſure, from the hand, the traitor was Wharton."

All Eloiſe's pleaſure was ceded to diſappointment,—"Then Auguſtus," ſaid ſhe mournfully, "you was not at the maſquerade."

"Ah, but Eloiſe, the fortune-teller was my ambaſſador, and brought *ſuch* news of the ſtate of your heart, as convinced me you had no predilection in favour of another, and I immediately determined to lay the ſtate of mine before you, and either receive from your hands my felicity or my miſery; but the rencontre I had with Mr. Burrows prevented me from ſubmitting to your decree in the manner I had determined.

Oh! Auguſtus," replied Eloiſe, "with a ſoft ſmile, why did you riſk your life on my account, if you had died I ſhould never again have felt a happy moment.—What would honour be to me then?—while I knew the rectitude of my own actions, what the world ſaid of me either to my praiſe or diſcredit, unleſs

unleſs you believed it, would have had no effect upon me."

"Oh! Eloiſe, could I hear that purity ſullied by the foul tongue of ſlander, and not vindicate it,—that innocence that ſhines ſo conſpicuous on your lovely countenance tarniſhed, and not reſent it,—No! whoever ſpeaks ill of that name, dearer to me than life, muſt ſtand the ſhot of my piſtol, or have his name branded with infamy.—Had I died, it would have been the death of glory, and the thought that I expired in the defence of virtue and Eloiſe, would have ſmoothed my paſſage to eternity."

Tears filled her lovely eyes, from which they ſlowly fell, notwithſtanding her endeavours to reſtrain them, on the mention of the danger he had encountered for her ſake, ſhe liſtened in ſilence to the progreſs of a paſſion, which he painted in all the terms of eloquence, he was on every ſubject maſter of, and which, as to people in love trifles become valuable, every little minutia was dwelt

dwelt on with rapture, the loved moment that he was ſtraining his eyes on the firſt evening of his arrival at montpelier.—The ſoft harmonious ſtrains of her harp the next morning,—the blaze of charms ſhe ſhewed the night he attended her to Lady Fitzerrington's ball, and laſtly, a minute yet more dear, more treaſured, her tearful eyes when ſhe preſented him his whip at the time of his departure from the chateau, and that whiſpered to his diſtracted heart, "Eloiſe loves."

Auguſtus, though often fondly reminded by Eloiſe not to exhauſt his frame, yet unrecovered from weakneſs, would purſue a ſubject ſo dear to him,—that hope and pleaſure would brighten his future days, where a woman with ſuch a cultivated mind, ſuch an unadulterated heart, was to adorn Beſborough.—It now only remained to aſk Lady Caſtle Fern's approbation, which both him and Eloiſe agreed was a reſpect due to this dear, this indulgent parent; nor did one al-

loying thought preſent itſelf, like the baſiliſk, to deſtroy a proſpect of happineſs they thought ſecure beyond the reach of any thing to deſtroy.

It would be intruding on my readers an unentertaining ſubject, (without a ſentimental miſs who has juſt emerged from the ſtately two and two walk, the ſtraight directed eye, which never looks aſkance, in the daily promenade round Queen-ſquare, or ſighs for nothing but the moment when Les affaires de Cœur is to begin) ſhould they peruſe the numberleſs aſſurances, the numberleſs badinages, paſt between two hearts ſo fondly attached, and which the delicacy of Eloiſe ended by reverting to the maſquerade, to inquire who the fortune-teller could be, when Auguſtus informing her that it was himſelf, the ſurpriſe of Eloiſe was extreme, ſhe, however, could not avoid complimenting herſelf on her perſpicuity in being ſo taken with him,—ſympathy ſhe thought certainly whiſpered her who it was, and rendered her ſo pleaſed

pleaſed with him, more in ſhort than ſhe had ever been with any one but Auguſtus, a circumſtance (that at the time) had given her ſome ſlight uneaſineſs, as it brought in queſtion her ſtability, and ſhe feared might ſhake her conſtancy for him.

Sir Auguſtus now in a deſultory manner, informed her of all the deceptions he had practiſed to diſguiſe himſelf from her ſo compleatly. and juſt as he had finiſhed his detail Lady, Caſtle Fern returned to the room, when Eloiſe painfully obſerved ſhe ſeemed reſerved and unhappy.

Eloiſe's harp had now changed it's ſituation from the cedar wood work room, to a quiet place in the chamber of Sir Auguſtus, and in the evenings ſhe uſually played and ſung till our hero found himſelf too weak to ſet up longer, and after imprinting the kiſſes of eternal love on her lily hand, ſuffered her to depart for the evening.

Cards having been ſent in thanks for the inquiries that had been at Beſborough-caſtle after Sir Auguſtus, in a few mornings brought much company, and Auguſtus found himſelf well enough to come down ſtairs, though he declined being ſeen but to a choſen few, of this number was Mr. Edmunds, who heartily rejoiced in his convaleſcence, at the ſame time giving him a few gentle hints as to expoſing his perſonal ſafety in a manner he thought ſo ridiculous, not to ſay wicked.

Auguſtus heard him with patience and good-humour; but he could eaſily conceive the paſſions of fifty not to be ſo alive as twenty-one, and therefore forebore to enter into an argument on the ſubject.

The divine was aſked to ſtay dinner, and as he had no family to readily complied, Auguſtus looked diſappointed, as he was on that account obliged to defer ſpeaking to his mother on the ſubject next his heart till the next day, but as he conſidered it

a matter of form, it gave him no uneaſineſs from the delay.—

" Oh ! blindneſs to the future kindly given."

The day paſſed in agreeable ſociety, and the night brought to Sir Auguſtus pleaſing illuſions,—when he aroſe the next morning, he determined immediately to unfold his happineſs to his mother, but when he entered the room he found Eloiſe there, and deferred mentioning it till Lady Caſtle Fern ſhould be alone, as he thought it indelicate to to do it before the miſtreſs of his heart, and ſhee diſcovered by his expreſſive countenance what were his wiſhes, and, fearing the ſubject might come on before her, ſoon left the room, and Sir Auguſtus then ſaid " You cannot, my deareſt mother, have been ſo long with Eloiſe and me, without obſerving my attachment; my heart, my ſoul, in ſhort my life is devoted to her.—It is not, as you muſt be aſſured, the romantic

partiality of a day, that the next lovely woman I ſee may break off, nor is it the attachment of a boy, who knows not his own mind.—No! tis a partiality founded on time, the moſt laſting baſis, a thorough knowledge of the virtue of its object; adorned with beauty and accompliſhments, and accompanied with ſuch innate modeſty and elegance, as renders the object of my choice admired and beloved.—Theſe charms then will for ever hold me in chains of love and reſpect, to be unlinked only with my exiſtence; it is therefore almoſt unneceſſary to ſay, I come to aſk your conſent to our union, and then to remain a ſpectator of our happineſs."

Auguſtus ſat expecting his mother's aſſent, but on looking up ſaw her face drowned in ſorrow, and in a voice tremulous with emotion, ſhe faintly anſwered,

"I wiſh from my ſoul I could be a ſpectator of your happineſs, if it depends on your marriage with Eloiſe; but Oh! Auguſtus when your father lay on his death-bed, he conjured

conjured me, in the moſt ſolemn manner never to conſent to your union."

If at that inſtant the earth had opened to receive him, if a Hydra with its hundred heads, had fixed his devouring jaws on him, his countenance could not have expreſſed more horror,

"Not hell's black jaws, though hell in ſunder part,
"And breathe blue fire,—could more aſſault his heart."

At length recovering his ſpeech,—"then indeed I am for ever wretched:—Tell me, madam, I conjure you, what could induce him to extort ſuch a promiſe from you?—Eloiſe, the moſt beautiful, as well as the moſt virtuous woman breathing, muſt do honour to the houſe of Caſtle Fern.—"

"From no diſlike to her, I am ſure, for he ſeemed like me but to live in her preſence."

"Great God! then how came he to make ſo cruel, ſo unjuſt a diſtinction."

"Never till this inſtant," ſaid Lady Caſtle Fern, "have I been ſo cruel towards Eloiſe as to let the objection tranſpire, but without conviction of its being right, you would not endeavour to overcome your ſad-placed love; Sir Lewis, as you ſay, had no diſlike to Eloiſe de Montblanc, ſhe was a woman of all others he wiſhed you to take pattern by when you ſelected a partner of your future life; in her he found every virtue combined; but a deſcendant of the great Earl of Kinmore muſt not connect his fate with the daughter of a man who was exiled from his country for murder;—whoſe name was branded with infamy,—and who lived unpitied and unknown in Italy.—Had it been for *any* thing but murder, for which he was baniſhed, Sir Lewis would have ſurmounted it, but that objection muſt be, my ſon, an adamantine bar to her ever becoming the wife of a member of our ancient, our honourable houſe; for would you let your children trace in their mother the deſcendant of a murderer?"

Auguſtus,

Auguſtus, whoſe family pride equalled his anceſtors, would have ſeen forcible reaſons to refuſe any woman but Eloiſe; but now he endeavoured by ſophiſtry to gain his mother to his opinion.

"Conſider madam," continued he, "if I had happened to have ſhot Mr. Burrows in the duel, then *my* caſe would have been the ſame as the unfortunate Montblanc; yet you would have ſtill thought *me* worthy the hand of *any* woman of family. For heaven's ſake revoke the cruel, the unkind ſentence, nor ſuffer me to linger my miſerable days a prey to hopeleſs love."

"Impoſſible, my ſon; the injunctions of a dying huſband would ſtare me in the face, and his accuſing ſpirit would never ſuffer me to know reſt, if I broke my promiſe.—You muſt conquer your unfortunate attachment, nor by arguments weak and futile, endeavour to ſhake my reſolution. Time will, I hope overcome your love, at leaſt chaſten it within the bounds of moderation and reaſon; and

depend upon it, my dear Auguſtus, reſolution will often overcome love where ſupineneſs would only feed it."

It may be ſeen throughout theſe pages, that Lady Caſtle Fern, like all others, found the taſk of ſelf-knowledge the moſt difficult, for ſupineneſs was the leading feature of *her* character.

"Oh! happineſs, our only aim, the boon for which we live, you muſt never be mine," ſaid Sir Auguſtus; "but may you be the portion of my adored Eloiſe, from henceforth I perform a pilgrimage, accompanied by miſery and love, each inſurmountable, for in triumphing over one, I muſt overcome the other, and what, I feel can never be done by the wretched Auguſtus.—Oh! that the piſtol of Burrows had cloſed theſe wretched eyes for ever, nor ſuffered me to hear thoſe direful words you have juſt pronounced."

He

He ſat for ſome minutes in the moſt violent agitation,—his hand covering his face, when at length ſtarting up in nearly a ſtate of frenzy,—"Oh! miſery extreme, whither will you drive me, to what extremities will you force me?—to madneſs, to deſpair!"—and caſting a look of unutterable anguiſh on his mother, he flew out of the room.

"Alas!" exclaimed Lady Caſtle Fern, "how is my boſom torn with contending emotions!—on one ſide the promiſe made my deceaſed huſband ought to be ſacred, and bids me refuſe;—while on the other hand, I ſee my only child, the darling of my age, the object whom all my earthly felicity centers in, devoured by a hopeleſs attachment, which (whatever I may adviſe him to do) I foreſee, never will it be broken but with exiſtence,—and like my loſt Maria, he may become a prey to love, and pay the error with his life.——Oh! hapleſs day when I firſt took the amiable, though unfortunate Eloiſe, from the peaceful cottage at Riſſone,—what

was at that time my blindneſs, not to foreſee that ſo amiable a girl muſt inſpire Auguſtus with more than friendſhip.—Not to know that Auguſtus Caſtle Fern was formed for Eloiſe de Montblanc, ſimilarity of diſpoſition, joined with beauty and accompliſhments have linked them in bands of permanent love."

Lady Caſtle Fern caſt up her eyes in an involuntary prayer, and petitioned the Almighty to remove her miſery. After this ejaculation ſhe found herſelf more compoſed, and inſpired with confidence; and as her ſorrows preſſed heavily on her heart ſhe yielded to their preſſure in tears, which relieved and compoſed her agitated boſom.

"But it is a weakneſs," ſighed ſhe, "I muſt riſe ſuperior to:——Let mine be the taſk not to lament but to comfort, and in endeavouring to give conſolation to Eloiſe and Auguſtus; let me forget to think on my own ſorrows, or even know I have any; to overcome their love for each other I preſage they never

never will do, but it may be chaſtened by time and reaſon, the firſt reſtorative will come of itſelf, and the laſt they will, I hope and truſt, learn from their rectitude of heart."

While Lady Caſtle Fern was uttering this praiſe-worthy ſoliloquy, Sir Auguſtus, overcome by unſpeakable anguiſh and deſpair, ruſhed into the room where Eloiſe had juſt entered, throwing himſelf at her feet, he ſaid,

"Forget me, ſpurn me from you, you muſt ceaſe to remember the wretched Auguſtus.——Oh! death, what are thy ſtings, in compariſon with the reſignation of thee, Eloiſe.—Oh! hour accurſed, that the wretched Montblanc was polluted with human blood, baniſhed from his country, his fortune, and his friends, theſe are the reaſons why Eloiſe muſt not, cannot be mine.—Cruel, cruel Montblanc: Tis viſiting the ſins of the father on the children.—Alas! thou clay-cold earth, open to receive me in thy chilling boſom, let me reſt my woes, too many for me to bear."

Eloiſe

Eloiſe at firſt thought he was inſane; but the direful words he uttered regarding her father, too ſoon convinced her it was no frenzy, but a reality, in which, alas! ſhe was too much involved. Tears now gave vent to her feelings, and ſhe ſat in ſilent deſpair. Auguſtus, on ſeeing the tears trickle down her cheeks, ſtopped, and became rather more calm.

"Deareſt, lovelieſt, divine Eloiſe, oblivion of the unfortunate Auguſtus muſt be thy lot, forget to think of me, and baniſh far from your mind that you was ever loved with the fondeſt adoration, by the miſerable, undone Auguſtus, who came into this world only to be the ſport of miſery and deſpair.—Ah! moſt lovely, moſt beloved of women, that has with thy power, ſo long charmed my ſenſes, "through ſmiling ſummer, winters drear;" teach me to behave like a man, and to die with fortitude, for the loſs of thee is death clad in accumulated horrors; from thy inſtruction let me learn ſubmiſſion."

"To

"To teach you," replied the weeping Eloiſe, "what by me never can be done, is impoſſible; death alone muſt vanquiſh my love; but, my dear Auguſtus, let us for the ſake of your amiable mother, be compoſed, nor, by ſeeing us ſo miſerable, render her ſo likewiſe."

"I will, Eloiſe, learn to bear like a man; but, alas, an early tomb encloſed my heart-broken ſiſter, and an early one will ere long encloſe this wretched frame, near her kindred ſoul."

Sir Auguſtus now left the room, while Eloiſe remained ſtupified with aſtoniſhment and grief, till ſhe was ſummoned to dinner, where a general ſilence reigned; Auguſtus never turned his eyes towards her, but fixed them vacantly on the table in ſilent deſpair; except once, when ſhe turned her head he threw on her a look of unſpeakable anguiſh mingled with pity.

After

After a dinner ſcarcely touched, they all retired, Lady Caſtle Fern to her dreſſing-room, Sir Auguſtus to his ſtudy, and Eloiſe to her chamber; where each paſſed their time in reflections too miſerable for repetition to pourtray.

CHAP.

CHAP IV.

THE next morning, as ſoon as day-light beamed in the hemiſphere, the reſtleſs Eloiſe aroſe and went into the park, where, with ſteps now hurried, now faltering, ſhe purſued her lonely way; experience had told her that the beauties of external nature, would divert and ſooth inward melancholy. She pauſed a moment to look round.

It was a chilling morning, in the latter end of May, the birds as they ſat on their ſlender

ſlender hold among the boughs, ſeemed to chirp in uniſon with her ſeelings.

Auguſtus, who had ſeen her from his chamber window, could not reſiſt the temptation of following her; a retroſpection too pleaſing to be contraſted with the ſombre preſent occupied his thoughts, and he found himſelf cloſe to Eloiſe ere he knew he was near her. The ſalutations of the morning was faintly uttered by both, as they walked round the park in almoſt ſilence.

After ſome time,—"Eloiſe," ſaid Sir Auguſtus, taking her hand "you *ſay* you love me."

"Is it, do you think," replied Eloiſe, "confined to words only."

"*That* I want to prove, if you love me with the affection I do you, you will conſent to be mine immediately."

The ſilence with which ſhe liſtened to his propoſal, encouraged him to hope it would not be rejected; and he proceeded in an animated

mated voice, and in the warmeſt colours of a youthful imagination, to paint the joys of even poverty and dependance, if ſhe was the beloved companion of his future days, "Oh! Eloiſe," ſaid he, "venture to truſt that heart that never erred, and conſent to be mine for ever; why ſhould we ſubmit the happineſs of our whole lives to the will of a being reſpected as my father; but who could have no right, by his harſh ambition, to interrupt our joys,—he ceaſed.—And the conflict which ſhe endured between love and what ſhe held her duty, made it long ere ſhe could determine never to become his wife without the conſent of Lady Caſtle Fern, though her heart acknowledged the truth of his aſſertions.

"Then Eloiſe," ſaid Sir Auguſtus, with diſdain, you care not for me; if you loved like me, you would brave every danger, and in deſpite of even reaſon, conſent to be mine."

The idea of his not being beloved by her, preſſed painfully on her mind, and ſhe ſaw

him

him preparing to quit her under an opinion that ſeemed to diſtract him; ſhe ſtruggled to recover the dignity of mind and reſolution that was neceſſary to ſupport her, and which held her bound in ties of gratitude to Lady Caſtle Fern; and after a moment, where it gained a triumph over inclination, ſhe begged him not to leave her unconvinced: "Stay," ſaid ſhe mournfully, "ſtay, and, diveſted of paſſion and deſpair, hear me," and with a candour that carried conviction to the heart, and which endeared her ſtill more to him, ſhe owned, and pictured the progreſs of her love; and although he would, he muſt ever remain the object of her tendereſt affections while life animated her frame, he never, never ſhould become that of her contrition and repentance.

Fatal as the ſpirit and fortitude of Eloiſe was to his hopes; yet her gentleneſs and kindneſs oppreſſed his heart with fondneſs ſo extreme, that he knew not by which he was moſt undone, her love or her duty; and he

ſaw Eloiſe almoſt ſinking to the earth, when he took her languid hand, and begged her to make him one promiſe, never to marry without his knowledge. She wept too much to be able to anſwer him, and he relapſed into all the madneſs of deſpair, told her, her's was a falſe, cold ſort of reaſoning ſyſtem, incompatible with love, to which ſhe was ſacrificing her happineſs, and if ſhe loved with an ardor like his, ſhe would accept his hand; then ſuddenly melted into more than femenine tenderneſs, and begged her to pardon a weakneſs he would try to conquer.

Eloiſe, with words broken and faint by her emotions, endeavoured to convince him how dear he was to her, conjured him for the ſake of his revered mother, to forget her, or remember each other only as friends.

"Will cold friendſhip ſuffice, Eloiſe," darting a look of reproach at her, "after the love that exiſts in my boſom? no! rather let it deſtroy my wretched exiſtence, than change it

it for inanimate friendſhip, the ſentiment of frigid age, not of ardent youth."

She tremblingly beſought him to be calm, to conſider, could he bear to imbitter the evening of the life of her that gave *him* birth, and *her* protection,—that a union formed under ſuch auſpices, could never be bleſſed, could never be approved in his cooler moments.

The ſtruggles of regard and pity, now overcame her frame, and ſhe ſunk on a mound near where they were ſtanding; a ſhower of tears fell from her eyes, and relieved her heart, which ſeemed burſting under the pains it felt.

Auguſtus, by all the ſoothing perſuaſion of an ardent paſſion, on his knees begged her to be compoſed, to pity and forgive him for doubting, ſuch purity could act but right; and would ſhe but promiſe him never to become the wife of another without his conſent,

it

it would be the only ſolace the remains of a wretched life could ever know, when far from her he ſhould linger out his miſerable years.

Eloiſe knelt by him, and in a broken, diſjointed voice, ſcarcely audible, ſo extreme were her emotions, "vowed never to admit another love."

To a heart ſo full of ſenſibility as Sir Auguſtus's, there could be no knowing when ſuch a ſcene would end; for when he contemplated the beautiful countenance of Eloiſe, looking up to heaven, imploring bleſſings on him and her kind benefactreſs, he was relapſing into all the ſoftneſs he wiſhed, for her ſake, to avoid. He raiſed her up, preſſed her to his boſom, while his manly tears fell on her face; invoked every angel to guard and protect her, and then darted into the caſtle.

She now ſaw one of the footmen advancing, and, waving her hand to ſhew ſhe was return-

ing to the houſe, he left the park, and ſhe "with fainting ſteps and ſlow," entered the hall.

"Oh! happineſs, oh! whither art thou flown," ſighed Eloiſe, "thee and my boſom are now ſtrangers for ever.—Love, thou tyrant love, while life animates my miſerable frame, muſt turn towards Auguſtus; death, only death, can break the laſting chain." This melancholy monologue brought her to the parlour where Lady Caſtle Fern was ſitting.

Sir Auguſtus was now ſummoned to breakfaſt, but begged to be excuſed attending, and a melancholy ſilence reigned between the two ladies, which was not broken but by the frequent ſighs, and unremitting tears of the amiable Eloiſe.

The ſun, as if in pity, forebore to ſhine, dark, black clouds envelop'd the ſky, and ſeemed to preſage rain. Eloiſe retired to her room to await the approaching ſtorm; ſhe opened

opened the caſement, a faint fanning in the air indicated thunder, and ſhe drew her chair in ſolemn ſilence to watch the lightning, which now began to flaſh around; the noiſe of the jarring elements inſpired her with awe, and in ſilence ſhe admired the tremendous ſcene; the lambent lightning played along the wood, and ſeemed for an inſtant to invelope it in flames, while in the valley below, the hard, rocky fragments of petrefaction appeared all cleft in pieces; the big thunder rolled with terrific noiſe in the caverns, and ſeemed ready to rend them in pieces. At length the lightning became more livid and faint, the thunder appeared at a greater diſtance, and the horizon began to clear, though it ſtill rained in torrents.

"Perhaps," ſighed Eloiſe, "ſome miſerable wretch on yonder barren hill is the victim of the ſtorm, "driven by the wind and batter'd by the rain;" yet is there miſery on earth greater than mine, is there a wretch, however unhappy, who would change ſitua-

tions with the miſerable Eloiſe. A life for theſe three years paſt, fraught with misfortune,—inheriting the ignominy by which my parent was marked,—left a dependant on the world; yet foſtered and cheered by the generous hand of ſtrangers, muſt I reward their kindneſs by clandeſtinely giving my hand to their ſon?—Never!—firſt may I ſee him lead to the altar, and there plight his vows to ſome happier woman. Yet can the pangs of departing life, even while the leaſt gleam ſparkles in the eye, exceed what I feel, and the woes I experience, ſeem like a peſtilence to ſpread contagion around;—but why am I ſo puniſhed, is it my preſumption in aſpiring to Sir Auguſtus? ſurely it cannot be, he, and even Lady Caſtle Fern, is involved in the puniſhment: but though I cannot vanquiſh, I ought to ſubmit without repining, and bear my evil deſtiny with reſolution."

In the mean time Sir Auguſtus, equally miſerable, retired to his own room, where a waking dream brought to his mind the time when

when he firſt ſaw Eloiſe, when his warm and lively imagination ſeemed to ſtrew futurity with happineſs, when "his ways were ways of pleaſantneſs, and all his paths were peace."

The retroſpect he found too different to his preſent proſpects to dwell on, and he turned his thoughts to the rugged path before him; it appeared dark and thorny, no hope dreſſed in deluding colours, greeted him, no pleaſing proſpect illumined the dark picture. In a fit of deſperation, he reſolved to quit his miſerable home, and in change of ſcene divert the melancholy he knew he ſhould every hour increaſe in the preſence of Eloiſe.

His man was ordered to pack up a ſmall portmanteau of linen, while he ſat down to write ſome letters. The groom ſoon after came to inform him the horſes were ready, and then Sir Auguſtus prepared to go, he took out the ſuppoſed picture of Eloiſe.

"Next to the angelic countenance you repreſent," ſaid he," thou art deareſt to me

on earth; divine taliſman of my heart, but with life I part with thee; theſe ſoft eyes will ſpeak comfort to my ſoul:—Even in deſpair thou art a ſolace to me."——Then fervently preſſing it he returned it to his boſom.

He now mounted his horſe, and though the ſtorm was in the meridian of its violence, he ſoon rode out of ſight of Beſborough-caſtle.

The butler at the accuſtomed hour ſummoned the inhabitants at the caſtle to dinner. Lady Caſtle Fern and Eloiſe waited ſome time for Sir Auguſtus; at laſt Eloiſe was ſent by Lady Caſtle Fern to the ſtudy, where, inſtead of Sir Auguſtus, ſhe found two letters, addreſſed, one to Lady Caſtle Fern, and the other to herſelf, which ſhe ſlipped into her pocket, and took the other to Lady Caſtle Fern, who, on opening it found the following words.

"E'er

"E'er the beſt and moſt revered of pa-
"rents receives this letter, I ſhall be many
"miles from the (once) peaceful walls of
"Beſborough. To inhabit the ſame houſe
"with Eloiſe, without her being mine is im-
"poſſible, and as to her becoming ſo, you
"have for ever forbid by a decree that has
"plunged me into eternal miſery.—Far, far
"from Beſborough I ſhall linger life away in
"diſappointment and love, petitioning an
"annihilation of every recollection, but that
"I am ſtill your affectionate, though unhap-
"py ſon, Auguſtus Caſtle Fern."

Lady Caſtle Fern's tears bliſtered the paper as ſhe read it, and when ſhe had finiſhed peruſing it, preſented it to Eloiſe, who, after caſting her eyes in a curſory manner over it, returned it without making any animadverſions. The little time, to her anxious mind, appeared like days, that prevented her reading the epiſtle of Auguſtus, and as ſoon as the untouched deſert was removed from the table, ſhe ſlipped, unobſerved by Lady Caſtle

Fern, whoſe mind was abſorbed by other reflections, into the park.—Her heart throbbed with violent emotions, and her hands trembled ſo much, that it was with difficulty ſhe could break the ſeal of the paper, which ran as follows.

" This day, my beloved Eloiſe, has wit-
" neſſed your vows, and my departure from
" Beſborough for ever, the place I once vain-
" ly flattered myſelf you would adorn as its
" miſtreſs, and in that hope all my joys cen-
" tered, but the ſtern, and I may add cruel
" decree of a deceaſed father, joined to your
" determination, bids me relinquiſh what my
" ſoul would have gloried in, had my hand
" been joined to thine; but I muſt recollect
" that *once* happy thought, but to know it
" is paſſed never to return. What is the
" world my Eloiſe without thee, but a blank,
" a dark, impenetrable chaos, that nothing
" can illumine: whether in the bright circle
" of a court, or the uncultivated wilds of
" a deſert, thy charming image, will ſtill
" flit before me, thy words, like muſic vi-
" brate

" brate on my ear, and where'er I go, the
" the bitter draught of deſpair is my portion,
" and miſery my guide; far from the caſtle
" I ſhall ſeek retirement, and there cheriſh
" thy image with enthuſiaſtic fondneſs; phi-
" loſophy will controul and ſoften each pang,
" but reflection will feed melancholy. No
" idea ſhall intrude but thee; no! Eloiſe, I
" ſolemnly ſwear in the face of heaven, I ne-
" ver adored any woman but thee, never
" plighted my unalterable vows of conſtancy
" to aught but thee.—Ah! that firſt the
" hand that was lifted againſt Dorrington,
" had withered, then indeed, we might have
" been happy; but I ought not to write
" longer, yet I cannot reſiſt it, and when I
" think that you will read theſe lines, it is a
" faint conſolation.

" Adieu, may every protecting angel guard
" thee with a love like mine, may happineſs
" be thy hand-maid, and every bleſſing at-
" tend thee, may innocence ſtrew the flow-
" ers of peace in thy path; this is now the
" only wiſh I dare form.—If beauty, if vir-

" tue, deſerves to be the peculiar care of " heaven, 'tis thine. Once more, adieu, may " you ceaſe to remember there exiſts ſo mi- " ſerable a wretch as

" your devoted

" Auguſtus."

Torrents of tears did Eloiſe ſhed on reading this epiſtle, and twenty times ſhe imprinted her lips on the inanimate paper.

" Loſt, adored Auguſtus! where art thou at this moment, far, far from thy Eloiſe. Oh! why did you tell me to forget you? tis madneſs to think of it." The words of her unfortunate nameſake recurred to her memory.

" Of all afflictions taught a lover yet,
" Tis ſure the hardeſt ſcience to forget."

" The fond remembrance of thy love, of thy virtues, of thy goodneſs, I will cheriſh within this grief torn-boſom, while life animates it."

Theſe reflections brought her to the wood adjoining the park, a trunk of an old tree by the

the ſide of a cavern that fronted the wood ſupplied the place of a chair, and here ſhe ſat herſelf down to contemplate her untoward deſtiny.

The laſt tints of a declining ſun gliſtened on the windows of the caſtle, and gave them the appearance of being on fire; while the moon, with her ſilvery beams, was juſt modeſtly riſing her livid head above the horizon. Eloiſe contemplated the ſcene with almoſt enthuſiaſtic devotion, the ſilence that reigned, ſuited her melancholy mind; not a leaf was ſtirring, all was a dead calm, except the croaking of the rooks in the lofty pines at ſome diſtance.

"Oh! bleſt repoſe," exclaimed ſhe, "you ſuit the gloomy tenor of my mind; but you bring not happineſs to my boſom."

The ſcene turned her heart to elegies of woe, and ſhe faintly repeated theſe lines.

" Oh! happineſs, oh, whither art thou fled,
" Thy place *alone*, is ſure among the dead;
" *There* loves and hatreds, then forget to burn,
" No pulſe that riots, fill the mouldering urn.
" The dire diſeaſe of love ne'er enters there,
" No heart that enters, e'er is fill'd with care,
" But peace ſits hov'ring high to guard the ſhrine,
" Sheds happineſs around in thoughts divine.
Oh! death, thou finiſher of all our grief,
" From you *alone* I muſt expect relief,
" By you *alone*, my woes will be ſuppreſs'd,
" By you the pangs ſubdu'd, that rack my breaſt.
" Death, only death, can e'er my love ſubdue,
" Ador'd Auguſtus, then believe me true;
" Then ſhall theſe ſwol'n eyes forget to weep,
" For peace is only, in eternal ſleep."

The ſun had now ſunk below the horizon, and the air had become cold and damp, Eloiſe looked at her watch, and found it was more than an hour beyond the uſual time of tea; ſhe aroſe from her craggy ſeat, and

walked

walked penſively towards the caſtle: the moon afforded her ſufficient light to trace her way through the ſkirts of the wood, though its foliage, in ſome places was ſo thick as to be nearly impervious to her ſilver beams; ſhe had nearly gained the park when a figure glided ſwiftly before her: the legendary tales which, in a country where hideous caverns riſe ſpontaneous, could not fail to be excited, and had been retailed by the ſervants to every new viſitor at the caſtle, but Eloiſe's mental powers were ſo deadened by ſorrow, that ſhe felt not fear, and for her perſonal ſafety ſhe paid not the leaſt regard, nor was there at preſent any neceſſity, for ſoon a voice cried "hallo! whither ſo faſt?" Eloiſe turned round, and beheld her quandom friend Capt. Bycroft.

"Whither ſo quick my little Thetis? don't run from old Neptune,—why you walk faſter by three knots than I can ſail."

Eloiſe now ſtopped, till he came up with her.

"I was coming" ſaid the captain "to ſee Sir Auguſtus after the pinking, he received, how does he do? poor lad, it was as bad as being floged at the yard-arms."

"He is not at home," ſaid Eloiſe; her heart ſickening at the diſcourſe, "but he was very well this morning: I believe he is gone for ſome time."

"Oh! never mind, I can pay my viſit to Lady Caſtle Fern; but my little mermaid, you ſeem in the dolefuls this evening, you look as if about to ſplit on Charybdis or Scylla."

Eloiſe faintly ſmiled at his compariſons, and the captain then aſſumed a graver tone.

"Will you Miſs Montblanc permit me to call on you to-morrow morning."

"Sir" "replied Eloiſe, "I never take the liberty of inviting any one to the Caſtle, ſo you muſt pardon me for not admitting *you*."

"Will

"Will you then, Miſs Montblanc," taking her hand, which ſhe haſtily withdrew, "anſwer me one plain queſtion?"

"Certainly, ſir."

"Tell me than, is your hand engaged?"

"Poſitively *not*," replied ſhe with heſitation.

"Have I then," ſaid Capt. Bycroft, "any chance of being the favoured fortunate one of the dear Eloiſe? I am not a man that can make fine ſpeeches; but with ſuch a woman every man muſt be happy: permit me then to lay my heart and fortune at your feet, and by ſailing ſmooth down the ſtream of pleaſure, by gaining your favour, ſhew how grateful I am for it."

Eloiſe thanked him for the honour he did her; but gave the ſame poſitive refuſal ſhe had before given; but on his preſſing his ſuit more ſtrenuouſly, ſhe told him that though her hand was free, her heart was engaged beyond all redemption. Her tears accompanied this

this confeſſion, and he forebore to preſs her further.

This anſwer brought them to the Caſtle, and Capt. Bycroft, unaſked, followed Eloiſe to the tea-room, where was Lady Caſtle Fern in conſultation with Mr. Edmunds.

"I could not conceive Eloiſe where you were gone, I was quite uneaſy," ſaid Lady Caſtle Fern, "however, I ſee you were under good protection, my dear."

"I have only juſt met this gentleman." replied Eloiſe.

"Pray" ſaid Capt. Bycroft, "where is Sir Auguſtus, I came on purpoſe, before I go my voyage, to ſee him."

"He is," ſaid Lady Caſtle Fern, endeavouring to ſuppreſs a riſing tear, "at preſent a bird of paſſage,—travelling from place to place."

Oh ho, I ſuppoſe like me, he has met with a flinty heart, and is gone on a land cruiſe to divert

divert melancholy:" turning to look at Eloiſe, who ſat diſpirited and diſtreſſed.

"I rather fancy not," ſaid Lady Caſtle Fern, "if you have ever met with a flinty heart, I am ſorry for it; but my ſon has not met with the like mortification I aſſure you." This ſhe ſaid to relieve Eloiſe, who ſeemed ready to ſink under a queſtion ſo diſtreſſing.

Capt. Bycroft, on this ſpeech, found himſelf, on ſeeing Eloiſe in tears, in a diſagreeable predicament, and after obſerving that if he chaſed Auguſtus, he feared he ſhould not come up with him, he took his leave.

Lady Caſtle Fern had ſent for Mr. Edmunds to conſult with him about the emancipation of her ſon, at which ſhe was extremely unhappy; he had always been her favourite child, and his now leaving the Caſtle, as he ſaid, for ever, grieved her, and ſo much, that Eloiſe feared the ſeat of reaſon would be ſhaken.

"Violent

"Violent meaſures" ſaid Mr. Edmunds, "muſt have violent oppoſitions."

Lady Caſtle Fern ſhook her head.

"You *muſt* know, my dear ſir, that violent meaſures will not do with Auguſtus;—though poſſeſſed of an equanimity of temper in general, it is now ſoured by love and diſappointment, and depend upon it, that, on coercion, he will be more reſolute and determined, nor is he at an age when controul could be offered."

"Give me leave to manage the affair," replied Mr. Edmunds, "and to-morrow I will ſet off, not to return till I bring ſome tidings of your ſon that will comfort you. A ſingle man, I have therefore no family to aſk, and as I can leave the care of my flock to my curate I ſhall, to-morrow morning, like a knight of the woeful countenance, ſet off in queſt of adventures.

This offer, ſo generouſly made, Lady Caſtle Fern cloud not reſiſt.

"Amiable

"Amiable man," exclaimed ſhe, "you perform every chriſtian duty in its fulleſt extent, and I hope you will be rewarded for it."

She now offered him her poſt-chaiſe to travel in; but as he was to become a knight, as he, to force a ſmile, told her, he thought his roſinante more adapted to the purpoſe: at nine o'clock, he wiſhed them good night, and returned to the parſonage to adjuſt ſome buſineſs preparatory to his journey.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

OUR unhappy hero now claims our attention and care. Sir Auguſtus ſet off in the midſt of the ſtorm, and was ſoon compleatly wet through; he minded it not, but his groom thought it nation odd to ride through thunder and lightning, while there was a good houſe over their heads.

He purſued his melancholy pilgrimage through the counties of Lincoln and Nottinghamſhire,

tinghamſhire, without finding himſelf a bit happier. The beautiful proſpects that uſed to pleaſe him, charmed no longer, the fine tints faded before his eyes, nothing appeared in ſuch perfection as when a lively happy boy, he had, with his father, and then merry little ſiſter, rode through the different contiguous counties. Diſſatisfied with every one, and likewiſe with himſelf, he wandered a voluntary exile: ſpending whole days in total ſecluſion; he found to his pain, that ſolitude only fanned the flame he endeavoured to extinguiſh: inſtead of being leſs miſerable, he was infinitely more ſo; the only ſincere pleaſure he felt, was in ſatisfying the phylanthropy of his diſpoſition, by relieving the wants of his fellow-creatures; and ſo univerſally is miſery diſſeminated, that he found this indulgence throughout the world.

It was now a fortnight ſince he had left Beſborough Caſtle, the laſt three days he had ſpent at a little inn at Crowland, on the borders of Cambridgeſhire.

In

In the mean time the vicar had mounted his horſe, and getting into the high road, he ſtopt to conſider which way to go; but fortune, who was determined he ſhould have a long journey, told him to go in ſearch of him to Mr. Wharton's, at his houſe then he arrived in the evening; but alaſs, he had not been there, for Sir Auguſtus well knew that his amiable tutor would perſuade him to return, and in caſe of his refuſal, go to his mother. After paſſing the night at his houſe, and conſulting together about where it was probable he might be gone, Mr. Edmunds bad Wharton farewel and took the road that leads through Leiceſterſhire, where, at Bolworth he ſtopt one day to reſt himſelf, and to take a ſurvey of the field where Richard the third died.

The next morning early he purſued his way to the Univerſity, where he thought he might be gone from an inducement of viſiting ſome of his fellow-cantabs.

The worthy divine was not contented with inquiring at the inns, but he aſked every one he

he met, whether they had ſeen Sir Auguſtus; and even when he found himſelf unſucceſsful, he went to the rooms of the collegians, ſome of them, whoſe good humour led them to pity the diſtreſs he appeared in, put him in a way to learn, while others enjoyed his purſuit, laughed at him as quiz, ſpread it abroad that he was the Vice Chancellor in diſguiſe, come to take cognizance of their behaviour, or ſome old muſty parſon come to look after his extravagant ſon, who was there termed a good hearty fellow, and therefore they hoped to nab old ſquare-toes.

After various reſearches, all equally fruitleſs, he turned his back on the Univerſity, bleſſing his ſtars that *he* lived at college when men were more rational, more civil, and leſs extravagant.

A fortnight he had now ſpent in vain, and was returning uneaſy and diſpirited, purſuing his unſucceſsful journey with leſs ardour, as his diſappointments became more frequent, and he

almoſt determined to give up the hope he ſet out with. Such were his cogitations when he arrived at Crowland the very ſame day Sir Auguſtus meant to quit it.

He had made fruitleſs reſearches at every inn as he thought, when a neat pleaſant houſe ſome diſtance from the road, with the ſign of the crown hung up at it, preſented itſelf before him: the divine entered, and after ordering his dinner begged the landlord might be ſent to him.

"Pray," ſaid Mr. Edmunds to him, "within this fortnight have you had a young, tall, handſome man, who travels on horſeback, with his groom at your houſe."

The man put his finger to his noſe, and began to conſider.——

"Why, Lord, ſir, ſuch quantities of people frequents this houſe, tis morally impoſſible to recollect; to be ſure there *mought* be for aught

aught I knows, and I dare ſay there has been, if he knew where to drink of choice wines; *howſomdever*, I'll call my miſtreſs, and aſk ſhe about it."

The hoſteſs, a little notable dame now made her appearance.

"Why, lord, huſband, I wiſh you would not call one away from one's buſineſs, all too about nothing, I was juſt getting the dinner ready for the church-wardens."

Mr. Edmunds, ſeeing the tenor of the lady, mildly repeated the queſtion.

"I am ſure I don't know any one anſwering that deſcription; why, I ſuppoſe, deary, it a'nt that there gentleman, who you ſays is half crazy: why, he walks about the houſe, and ſtamps his feet like a madman."

"I wiſh," ſaid the landlord "it mought be, for I hope then you'll take 'un away with ye, for I was thinking to ſend to Stamford for

for the mad doctor on Saturday, when the cart goes to market. There the groom ſets in our kitchen, and you may ſpeak to him."

The groom now was ſummoned, and much to the joy of Mr. Edmunds, found it was honeſt William.

" God bleſs your honour, I am glad you're come, I hope you'll be able to perſuade my poor maſter to return ; nation bad to be ſure, almoſt gone poor dear ſoul, his ſenſes are almoſt loſt."

" This, William, is a ſad account."

" Sad account, indeed, your honour," (and he wiped his eyes,) t'would break your heart to ſee him; but here he comes from his walk."

Mr. Edmunds aroſe to meet him, and was ſhocked to ſee what ravages, in ſo ſhort a time, ſorrow had made on him; his handſome countenance now only ſhewed the faint outlines of what it once was, and his whole fabric appeared

peared but as the ruins of a once beautiful form.

Sir Auguſtus ſeemed gratified at ſeeing him, and a faint ray of pleaſure gleamed in his dim eyes, till he endeavoured to perſuade him to return to the Caſtle.

"Is this kind of you," exclaimed he, (a tranſitory bluſh of reſentment o'erſpreading his countenance) "to find out my retreat for this purpoſe;—but know this, that it is all in vain, for never will I return to the houſe that contains————he ſtopt, as if afraid to continue,——and then in a voice ſcarcely articulate, he repeated the much lov'd name of Eloiſe:—he continued, "I mean to leave England ſhortly for ever, and in foreign climes ſeek that happineſs, (at leaſt) contentment, I have forfeited in Britain."

Mr. Edmunds, by dint of perſuaſion, and well-timed arguments, (for he dared not remonſtrate) made him promiſe not to quit the kingdom.

He then, in hopes of working on his feelings, painted in the moſt glowing language, the grief of his mother, the ſufferings ſhe experienced on his account.

This ſeemed to touch him more than any other conſideration, and he promiſed to do any thing but return home; that was a point that not all the rhetoric of Mr. Edmunds could gain, and after dining with Sir Auguſtus, and entreating him to take care of his health, he once more mounted Roſinante, and purſued his way to Beſborough. The direct road was about ſeventy miles, and he finiſhed his journey the next day but one, juſt as dinner was ſet on the table at the Caſtle, and which he thought was no bad thing, for he was extremely hungry.

No ſooner was the cloth removed, and the ſervants left the room, than he began to unfold his adventures.

Lady Caſtle Fern, who had cheriſhed a hope that the eloquence of Mr. Edmunds would

would have brought Sir Auguſtus back to the caſtle, was cruelly diſappointed when ſhe found there was not the moſt remote probability of his return, nor was Eloiſe doomed to receive a leſs ſevere mortification:—her wiſhes had been thoſe of her protectreſs; but her hopes had been varniſhed by the ſanguineneſs of youth; ſhe had vainly deluded her mind with the idea that he would return with Mr. Edmunds, and in his ſight ſhe thought ſhe ſhould be comparatively happy.

The remainder of the day paſſed in almoſt ſilent monotony, Sir Auguſtus was the dear theme of their thoughts, but not of their converſation, and at an early hour Mr. Edmunds pleaded fatigue and returned home, while Lady Caſtle Fern and her dear protegeé retired ſoon after to their ſeparate apartments.

Eloiſe's pillow brought not oblivion, but bitter and acute reflection:—The ſoothing voice of hope, had now ſo frequently been ſilenced by the rude hand of diſappointment,

that ſhe involuntarily gave way to the preſentiment that ſhe ſhould never more ſee Auguſtus; but what were (ſhe thought) her ſeelings, in compariſon of thoſe of Lady Caſtle Fern; ſhe knew ſhe muſt always be unhappy, yet ought ſhe to diſſeminate it in the boſom of her to whom ſhe was bound by the ſtrongeſt chain, (gratitude,) to render happy.

"And ſhall I," ſighed ſhe, "be a mortal ſo ſelfiſh, as, by my ſtay at Beſborough, render Sir Auguſtus an alien to his houſe, ſhall I eſtrange him from his mother, and let him wander unknown in obſcurity;—ought I, while I enjoy benefits innumerable from them, render a family, already ſufficiently unfortunate, additionally ſo;—can I ſee that mother who protected me in my misfortunes, and defended me from the blaſt of poverty, who has been more kind to me than a mother, becauſe neither allied by blood or duty. A woman then who has acted ſo nobly, can I ſee tears trickle down her grief-worn face, for

for the abſence of her child, occaſioned by me? No! I may be unfortunate, but I never will be ungrateful, nor wound the boſom into which I can pour the balm of conſolation: no longer ſhall the amiable Auguſtus be eſtranged from his parent by me: Far, far from dear England will I ſeek a retreat in a convent, there, from a knowledge of having done right, I ſhall, at leaſt, live contented.

"Could my dear deceaſed mother behold me, would ſhe not pity rather than cenſure me, for throwing myſelf an iſolated being among people whoſe tenets ſhe abhorred; but they cannot corrupt mine, and though obliged to accede to their forms while kneeling at the ſhrine of a ſaint, may I not worſhip the Almighty in all my firſt taught purity of ſpirit, and though my perſon will be confined, my will, like my words, will be free as air.—But whither muſt I bend my ſteps? not to my native land, for there oppreſſion and ſlavery reign triumphant; there religion is changed for blaſphemy and ſedition; whither then but to Italy? there, be-

yound the tremendous Alps, breathe ſighs to dear Albion, and invoke bleſſings on the inhabitants of, I truſt, the then peaceful walls of Beſborough."

Theſe reflections were at length overcome by fatigue, and ſhe for a ſhort time changed the form of miſery to that of tranquillity.

You may ſuppoſe, my fair readers, that the conflict between love and gratitude, was a ſevere one in the boſom of Eloiſe; but at length the latter triumphed, and gave her courage ſhe never till now knew ſhe poſſeſſed.

The next morning, after breakfaſt, ſhe ſought Lady Caſtle Fern, and found her in her dreſſing-room, looking at a trinket her much loved ſon had lately preſented to her; the tears rolled ſlowly down her face, and ſhe wiped them away when Eloiſe opened the door, who reſpected her ſorrow too much to interrupt it, and ſhe was going to retire when

when Lady Caſtle Fern waved her hand for her to ſtay.

Eloiſe drew her chair towards Lady Caſtle Fern, and then in a tremulous, and inarticulate voice, informed her of her recent determination.

"My dear madam," continued ſhe, "I have too long already, though I know innocently, plunged your much loved family into miſery, and where it has ever been my wiſh to ſhew gratitude, I have diſſeminated uneaſineſs: ſhall I continue then to render you unhappy, when duty bids me to reverſe the ſcene."

"I know," interrupted Lady Caſtle Fern, "your time, ſince you came from the cottage, has been ſpent but in alleviating the diſtreſs of others, and ſhewing to Sir Lewis and myſelf your gratitude and affection."

"Affection," reſumed Eloiſe, "can only be ſhewn by gratitude; not through paſſive gratitude, ſuch as is only expreſſed by words, but

active, ſimilar to what I now intend to put in force."

The firſt emotions of Lady Caſtle Fern were thoſe of ſurpriſe and admiration, but which immediately gave place to other contending paſſions in her agonized boſom.—Could ſhe, who had made a voluntary promiſe to her much loved friend, Madam Montblanc, of protecting her amiable child, ſuffer her to go for ever, in all probability, from her foſtering roof?—ſo lovely, and at ſo dangerous a period of her life; it was true a cloiſter would both ſhelter her from the frowns of an unfeeling world, and yield an innocent and calm ſequeſter from the ſhafts of malice; but when ſhe looked up and ſaw the lovely creature, rendered thrice intereſting by her mild dejection and reſignation, that was to be ſhut within its dreary walls, ſhe almoſt repented not endeavouring to reverſe Sir Lewis's harſh decree. Next, the dying injunctions of her mother to her child, never to change her religion, and which ſhe feared, though Eloiſe poſſeſſed

poſſeſſed an uncommon ſhare of underſtanding and firmneſs, might yield to conſtant entreaty, which from cuſtom might become pleaſing; and the laſt, and moſt perſuaſive for oppoſing her going, was, her tenderneſs, ſimplicity and truth; whoſe unremitting gratitude, and ſweet ſociety, were conſtant ſolaces, which had cheered her in ſolitude, ſoothed her in affliction, and, with Auguſtus, formed the only bleſſings ſhe looked forward to in advancing age.—"Then why ſhould I" ſaid ſhe, "oppoſe a union that would make happy two beings who ſeem as if heaven had formed them for each other; yet, could they be bleſt under the dying interdiction of a man whoſe partiality to Eloiſe, would have done any ſtain away, but one he thought ſo inimical to his ſon's honour and happineſs. Here her conflicting emotions became ſo accute as to leave her only the power to ſay, "Eloiſe, do not leave me."

"Let me," replied Eloiſe, "while I have power, refuſe the temptation that would annihilate

nihilate my gratitude, and with keen reflection imbitter your future days."

Thus, re-animated by a ſenſe of what ſhe owed her benefactreſs, ſhe compleated the triumph of gratitude over temptation.

Lady Caſtle Fern could only preſs her to her maternal boſom, in ſilence, while the heroic action ſhe was about to perform, had given her an artificial flow of ſpirits, now with the tenderneſs of Lady Caſtle Fern, relapſed into her natural character, and breaking from her embrace, ſhe ruſhed out of the room, to conceal the tears which now came into her eyes, and which ſhe thought would weaken her gratitude.

Lady Caſtle Fern roſe to follow her; but her feet refuſed to obey, and ſhe ſat down once more to ruminate over the diſtreſſing ſcene that had juſt paſſed, and which, after many ſucceeding opinions, only were decided by the advice of Mr. Edmunds, to whom ſhe

ſhe had in confidence told the woes (and from whence derived) of Auguſtus and Eloiſe.

He, although what is called a good ſort of a man, and perhaps, ſaw more of pride than juſtice in the laſt injunctions of Sir Lewis, yet, with all the littleneſs that too frequently miſguides the judgment, where a ſuperior is to be gratified, ſaw that Lady Caſtle Fern, though much pained, when he adviſed the removal of Eloiſe, yet ſuffered it to have a place in her mind; urged it as the only expedient to reſtore peace to the family.

After ſome minutes conſideration, ſhe was determined to oppoſe ſo virtuous a reſolution no longer, but invoke heaven to reſtore contentment to the boſom of her who had ſacrificed it to her family. The dinner bell rang while theſe meditations were paſſing in her mind, and ſhe met Eloiſe juſt as ſhe reached the hall; neither of them ſpoke, but Lady Caſtle Fern ſeeing Eloiſe's eyes were red with weeping, gently preſſed her hand,

it ſeemed to convey to her, tenderneſs ſtronger than the moſt eloquent language could expreſs, and ſhe burſt into tears: it was a weakneſs, after the recent behaviour, ſhe thought truly degrading, as ſhe feared it would give riſe to ſuſpicions that ſhe repented of her determination, and, after a ſtruggle between her feelings and her reſolution, the latter triumphed, and ſhe regained her appearance of compoſure.

In the evening ſhe again aſſumed courage to mention her departure as a thing certain, though ſhe ſecretly nouriſhed the hope that it might be oppoſed.

Lady Caſtle Fern then touched on her religion, and adviſed her never to change it, and even in caſe that force was uſed, to quit the convent, and return again to her foſtering roof, when ſhe hoped that their unfortunate paſſion would ſo far have ſubſided, as to permit them to meet without a renewal of their miſery.

Eloiſe

Eloiſe ſhook her head, and dropping on the hand which ſhe preſſed to her heart, a tear, ſhe took her candle and retired to her room for the night.

The roſeate morn, with welcome bluſhes ſpread, and once more dawned to wake from partial oblivion, alike the prince and the peaſant; the ſun, as he reared his head to begin his diurnal courſe, ſtole, with his ſlanting rays, between the ſhutters of Eloiſe's chamber, and awoke her, though not much refreſhed by ſleep, for ſombre and portentous dreams had "marred the kindred bleſſings of the unhappy." The dreadful certainty, now far beyond the late preſentiment of a depreſſed imagination, that ſhe ſhould ſee Auguſtus no more, roſe continually before her. No more ſhould ſhe hear his well known ſteps along the ſtone hall, never again ſhould ſhe hear that voice that always brought harmony to her boſom.

Yet a little while, and his manly form, now ſo recent in her mind, would be effaced;

no longer would ſhe be able to retrace thoſe fine features; not all the efforts of her fond fancy would bring him to her mind with exactneſs, his words, his actions, all, all would, with change of ſcene, be fled her imagination; yet his adored image would be written on her heart in characters ſo indelible, that neither time, place, or abſence, could obliterate. Shortly thoſe ſpreading elms, that waved high their luxuriant heads, and ſhaded her dreſſing room window, ſhe ſhould ſee no more, every guſt of wind, as it now murmured through them, ſeem to ſay, "Eloiſe is going—for ever. Some years hence, when time, and the blank monotony of a convent, had effaced all other ſcenes, Beſborough, and its dear inhabitants would riſe to her immagination.

Theſe were the diſtracting reflections that held her, either ſleeping or waking, day after day ſhe lingered, without ſpeaking on the mournful ſubject to Lady Caſtle Fern; yet why did ſhe not? thought ſhe, as ſhe revolved

it

it in her mind, ſhe ſhould ſee Auguſtus no more,—ſhe did not wiſh it—yet the tears that accompanied theſe ideas proved the falſity of the aſſertion;—ſhe had obſerved Mr. Edmunds in deep conſultation with Lady Caſtle Fern, and ſuppoſing it on the ſubject of her departure, ſhe one evening timidly aſked in what manner it would be moſt expedient for her to travel, obſerving that the moſt private would be the one conſonant with her melancholy mind.

After revolving in her thoughts which of her numerous acquaintance it would be moſt eligible for Eloiſe to take up her ſhort abode in London with, Lady Caſtle Fern recollected an attendant of her juvenille days, for whom ſhe retained a great regard, and who was married to a linen-draper in Smithfield.

To Mrs. Wilkins then, at length it was agreed that ſhe ſhould go, attended by Mrs. Bridget, and this ſeemed a manner moſt agreeable to Eloiſe, who hoped in that part of the metropolis, ſhe ſhould ſtand the leaſt chance

chance of ſeeing any one who had ever viſited at Lady Caſtle Fern.

The next morning then, Lady Caſtle Fern wrote to London, begging Mrs. Wilkins to take Eloiſe a paſſage in the firſt commodious veſſel that was ſailing for Italy, in which there was any female paſſengers.

CHAP.

CHAP VI.

IT was now within three days of her departure from Beſborough-caſtle for ever; in vain ſhe endeavoured by reaſon, to convince herſelf, that, in performing her duty, ſhe was purſuing peace; but while ſhe flattered herſelf it was ſo, her tears fell to controvert it, and her mind was agonized with deſpair. Could ſhe (ſhe thought) once more ſee Auguſtus, ſhe ſhould be happy: one laſt look, and then away miſery,—once more, ere ſhe encloſed her faded form within the cloiſters of

of a convent, to behold that face ſhe had ſo often contemplated with pleaſure; but alas, it was impoſſible, and ſhe endeavoured not to wiſh it; but it would, in deſpite of her, intrude itſelf, and at length ſhe was ſo overcome with it, that it gave way to no other thought, and rendered her almoſt incapable of performing the mournful office of putting up her wardrobe.

The different articles of her apparel, as ſhe ſlowly conveyed them from her drawers to her trunks, alike reminded her of Auguſtus, each as ſhe had worn them by turns, having met with his admiration; at length the melancholy taſk was done, and the drawers cleared, ſave the ſhagreen caſe, rendered to her ſacred, as containing the picture of her dear loſt parent: as the caſe met her weeping eyes, ſhe recollected that the picture and her woes, were now her only certain poſſeſſions. "Dear ſainted reſemblance of the beſt and moſt affectionate of parents, never! never ſhall I ſee you more; yet, perhaps, you now

witneſs my ſorrows, and pity them,—perhaps a penſive ghoſt, you hover round and weep your daughter's woes.

Eloiſe took up the caſe, but a kind of foreboding of the diſappointment ſhe was to meet, held her from opening it; ſhe ſtill claſped it in her hand, preſſed it to her boſom, and wetted it with her tears: reſolution became a coward, and had not the caſe fell from her trembling hands to the floor, the fatal certainty would have remained a ſecret ſome time longer.

Come, oh! come, all ye horrors, and aid me in delineating the features of Eloiſe when ſhe found out this laſt misfortune,—to attempt a deſcription of them is vain,—language cannot pourtray them. Her firſt emotion was ſurpriſe, which in the next inſtant was ſuceeded by aſtoniſhment and grief;—who could have taken it? her ſuſpicions muſt be confined to a few, as no one knew ſhe poſſeſſed the picture but Lady Caſtle Fern and Bridget:—

Bridget:—one idea gave place to another equally void of truth;—the gold that it was ſet in, was paltry, in compariſon with the ring belonging to Dorrington, yet that was left. One inſtant her ſuſpicions were on Bridget, and the next, duly aſhamed of having given ſuch an idea place in her boſom, ſhe repelled it as faſt as it entered. Mrs. Bridget at this inſtant entered her room, and ſhe aſked her if ſhe had any where ſeen the picture, ſhe replied with a countenance ſo unmoved by guilt, a voice, in which truth ſpoke ſo forcibly, that Eloiſe was inclined to fall at her feet and aſk forgiveneſs for her unjuſt ſurmiſes, and rather render herſelf ſubject to her diſlike, than her own painful reflections for having wronged her. All her reſearches proved fruitleſs, and ſhe retired to her bed; but ſleep fled for ſome time, and her pillow was bedewed with tears, till they acted ſoporificly, and huſhed her woes in ſleep.

The next day, after breakfaſt, ſhe ſoftly ſtole up ſtairs and entered Lady Caſtle Fern's room,

room, where ſhe was ſitting, revolving in her mind the many misfortunes that, within a ſhort time, had befallen their family, from one cauſe, and that cauſe, love!

Eloiſe's entry broke the chain of her ideas, and awakened her from a reverie, which, from the uneaſineſs it gave her, ſhe was glad to ſhake off.

Eloiſe, the ever facinating Eloiſe, now ſtood before her to make an earneſt requeſt, one too, which ſhe thought would bring one faint ray of happineſs to her boſom, this was, a picture of Auguſtus.

This requeſt, ſo unthought of, awakened Lady Caſtle Fern's aſtoniſhment; it was, of of all others, the moſt improper one to accede to; of this, with all the arguments of which ſhe was miſtreſs, ſhe endeavoured to convince her. That perſuaſive voice ſhe had ſeldom heard unmoved, now pleaded in the anguiſh

anguiſh of deſpair, entreated, and even ſupplicated her on her knees.

Lady Caſtle Fern's chief weakneſs, was want of reſolution; could ſhe then ſee unmoved, the burning tear of miſery, roll down the faded cheek of Eloiſe;—faded too, by love for her ſon: could ſhe longer be deaf to the ſupplication of purity and innocence, could ſhe refuſe this laſt requeſt?—No! ſhe aroſe, went to her eſcrutoire, and preſented a picture of Auguſtus, done when a merry, cherry-cheeked boy;—receive it, Eloiſe, tis your wiſh to poſſeſs it; but beware, it will bring miſery, not peace.

Eloiſe could only preſs her hand to her boſom, ſalute it, and ruſh out of the room.

When arrived at her own, ſhe ſat down to trace in his infantine countenance, the likeneſs of features now ripened into manhood; every

every line told it was the ſame Auguſtus ſhe adored,

"When love breathed his infant ſighs, from anguiſh free."

and after beſtowing on it kiſſes innumerable, ſhe encloſed it within the caſe that once contained the picture of her mother, as being the thing next adored to that dear regretted, and much lamented portrait.

The two days that intervened Eloiſe's going were paſſed in miſery, yet, even theſe, ſhe would have given worlds, had ſhe poſſeſſed them, to have paſſed over again.

The next day, at ſeven o'clock, ſhe was to ſet off, and at five, according to her deſire, Mrs. Bridget ſummoned her to riſe; but when ſhe came Eloiſe was up and dreſſed; ſhe deſcended the ſtairs and went into the park, every ſhrub did ſhe trace, the row of elms and pines, where the rooks croaked their morning and evening ſong; the fragrant limes appeared more fragrant than uſual; the ſcene now ſhe was about to quit,

ſhone

ſhone in additional ſplendor, vegetation appeared in greater perfection than ever, and all nature, as if to mock her woes, looked more beautiful than uſual.

At length ſhe was ſummoned to breakfaſt; walked mournfully towards the parlor, where Lady Caſtle Fern ſat a monument of woe; the relief of tears were denied her, but her heart was ready to burſt; breakfaſt was brought in, in vain did Lady Caſtle Fern preſs her to take ſome, in vain did ſhe endeavour to eat; but grief and deſpair had taken away every deſire for food; ſhe endeavoured to be calm, but tearsſoftly ſtole down her cheeks;—deep ſighs, in deſpite of her reſolution, were heard from her boſom,—her hands trembled with agitation.

The great clock now ſtruck ſeven, and the butler, with portly ſteps, walked into the room; not as uſual told his buſineſs at the door, but approaching with a low and ſolemn voice,

voice, told Eloiſe her trunks were corded on the chaiſe.

She heard the carriage advance, and looked mournfully round, as if to ſay, will no one ſave me from deſpair; ſhe ſlowly aroſe, and advanced towards Lady Caſtle Fern, who ſat abſorbed in grief, nor could the hope, as it aroſe in her boſom, that ſhe was acting right, ſupport her through a ſcene ſo afflicting.

"Eloiſe," ſaid ſhe,——her voice faltered ſo that what ſhe meant to add, was not ſufficiently articulate to be underſtood;—ſhe attempted to ſpeak again, but her reſolution not being firm enough to ſupport her, ſhe could only wave her hand and ſay, "yet! Eloiſe, do not leave me!"————

Here now, the form of Auguſtus roſe to her imagination, as Bridget carefully lifted her lute to put it into the carriage, as he hung over her in raptures when ſhe laſt touched its (now for ever) diſcordant ſtrings;

ſhe was rivetted to the ſpot where ſhe ſtood, and totally unable to leave the room.

At this moment Mr. Edmunds entered it; his errand was to preach reſolution to his friend and patroneſs; yet, on beholding Eloiſe,—the mild dejection of her beautiful countenance, rendered under the preſent circumſtances ſo intereſting, cauſed ſuch emotions, that he was unable to utter a word, of the many ſcriptural phraſes he had aſſorted for the occaſion; but Eloiſe, whoſe reſolution had early been ſtrengthened by the precepts of her mother, bluſhed at ſhewing ſuch a weakneſs of mind before him, and ſhe once more advanced to Lady Caſtle Fern, who hung on her neck in ſpeechleſs agony, while ſhe lifting her pious hands to heaven, invoking every bleſſing on her and her ſon.

"Come, come," ſaid Mr. Edmunds, "enough of this uſeleſs and diſtreſſing ſcene."

This

This ſpeech rouſed Eloiſe from her ſtupor of grief, ſhe ſtarted, and preſſed the hand of Lady Caſtle Fern.

Once more they bade each other adieu,—lingered an inſtant,—and then ſeparated,—as ſhe thought for ever;——ſhe hurried into the poſt-chaiſe, followed by Mrs. Bridget, and ſat abſorbed in grief, till ſhe was awakened by the ſtopping of the carriage:—it rouſed her from almoſt a ſtate of inſenſibility, for hope treacherouſly whiſpered her, it was Auguſtus, and leaning forward, inſtead of ſeeing his well known form, the round unmeaning face of Anthony preſented itſelf at the window of the carriage. He wiſhed to talk on the old ſubject, and recollecting that the prohibition was from Auguſtus, not from Eloiſe, he began offering his conſolatory advice, with more good-nature than judgment.

"For God's ſake! my dear pretty miſs, don't you take on ſo, I am ſure, yet, you'll return and be miſtreſs of the Caſtle, I am ſure I

know who will break their heart if you don't, and yet it will be all one a hundred years hence."

While Bridget, with more prudence than uſual, and what is more probable, a wiſh to get to London, begged the poſtillions to drive on, and left Anthony ere he had uttered half what he meant to ſay.

As the chaiſe wound ſlowly down the hill, Eloiſe caſt mournfully her eyes on the proſpect around, and could not help reflecting on her ſevere fate, which, in the meridian of her youth, and at a time of life when moſt capable of taſting happineſs, ſnatched her from every enjoyment.

The ſun was glowing in the zenith of his glory, on the white turrets of the Caſtle, which caught her eyes between the foliage of the ſturdy oaks; ſhe ardently gazed on them till they were entirely loſt from her ſight, no veſtige of the honourable ſtructure was

was to be traced, for the trees obſcured it from view;—yet the blue ſmoke, from the lodge, as it curled, and ſeemed to mount to the ſkies, ſtill drew her attention.

"Alas! poor Anthony, ſaid ſhe, I ſhall never ſee thee again; a few years, as you have juſt ſaid, and we ſhall all be food for worms, then alike our woes and our joys will ceaſe."

The laſt faint glare of the lodge died away on her ſight as ſhe uttered this ſoliloquy, and ſhe ſuppoſed ſhe had beheld the laſt part of the building, when turning an angle the weſt front of it burſt on her ſight and at a large window on the back ſtair-caſe, ſhe eſpied Lady Caſtle Fern; it appeared like a reprieve from death, to behold her once more, and ſhe waved her lily hand till the hill which they now reached the bottom of, hung tremendouſly over them, and ſhut from her ſight, alike the ſpacious edifice and the revered form.

Eloiſe was ſo abſorbed with miſery, that ſhe ſaw not the beauties around her, which, in other times, would have excited her aſtoniſhment and admiration; they travelled as faſt as four horſes could go, Mrs. Bridget's tongue keeping pace with the horſes, and Eloiſe's tears; but as Bridget was never ſo happy as when ſhe heard her own ſweet tongue, ſhe did not even wiſh to be anſwered, and Eloiſe was contented to let her continue her loquacity while ſhe ſhed more tears than ever before watered the counties through which they paſſed.

They ſlept on the road, and the next evening arrived at Mr. Wilkins's houſe in Smithfield; Eloiſe was introduced into a room behind the ſhop, where was Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins, two daughters, a ſon, and a gentleman: they ſoon ſat down to ſupper, Eloiſe eat little, and talked leſs, though ſeveral overtures were made by the facetious viſitant, to force her into converſation.

"I

"I think miſs, you ſeem by your talk, to come from foreign parts; none the worſe for that tho' to my mind.

"Darwell," ſaid Mr. Wilkins, bowing obſequiouſly to him, "after your fine houſe, you can hardly puſh into this ſmall room, my parlour is only a cloſet to your's."

"But ah! Wilkins," replied he, looking at our heroine, "what's my fine houſe to me, without ſome fair lady to ſhare it with?"

This ſpeech, delivered in ſomewhat of a theatrical tone, truly diſguſted Eloiſe, and, inſtead of giving him ſome encouragement, as he expected, ſhe drew up with unuſual dignity. This he miſtook for her modeſty, and, therefore was not diſmayed, but aſked her to drink a glaſs of wine with him; but as he heard ſhe belonged to a *lady*, to ſhew his reſpect, kept a great diſtance from her, while ſhe, who wiſhed to appear all condeſcention, immediately aſſented, though with great gravity, and then, complaining of fatigue, begged leave to retire.

One of the Miſs Wilkins accompanied her to her room, which was two pair of ſtairs high, for the lower part of their houſe was lett.

"Lord, miſs, you did not know that that gentleman was one of the richeſt ſquires in the city;—I think he ſeemed very much pleaſed with you; lord, miſs, if you had but been good-natured, to him, and tried, you might have got him for your huſband, and then you need not have returned to foreign lands, which I ſee you do not like, by your *melancholic* face."

"It is a mere matter of choice," replied Eloiſe, having heard only the latter part of this elaborate ſpeech," it is with my own free will that I go to Italy."

"Why, lord bleſs me, miſs, I think nothing can't be no worſe, than going to thoſe places; do you know *Par* read in the news-paper, that eighteen people had been gullentin'd by one Robert Spear."

Miſs Wilkins, whoſe geographical knowledge was confined to the city of London though

thought that Italy and France were the ſame, and that the cruelties ſhe had juſt ſet forth, were, except in England, extended over the globe.

After dooming Eloiſe to hear all ſhe knew about politics, and which were the only things her ſhallow brains ran on, wiſhed her good night, and once more Eloiſe found herſelf alone.

She then knelt down, and implored protection of the divine Lord of heaven and earth, and then, from fatigue, ſunk into a temporary oblivion of her ſorrows; the dear image of Auguſtus roſe to her fond imagination, and prompted her golden viſions.

The next morning ſhe aſſembled with the family to breakfaſt, where the Smithfield woollen-draper, again took his ſeat next her. Mr. Wilkins winked ſignificantly at his wife,

to ſee the impreſſion ſhe had made, while the daughters ſmirked and ſmiled.

"I am come, Wilkins, to ſay I think we may have a day's pleaſure of it to day, as this young miſs is going aboard one of your Signor's at Deptford, I think we might all go together, and have a day's junqueting, and ſo attend the lady aboard."

Eloiſe aſſured them ſhe wanted no attendance, for that ſhe had Lady Caſtle Fern's ſervant.

"But I 'ſpoſe, miſs," replied the woollen-draper, "you won't "throw a good bone to the dog," when 'tis offered you, becauſe you did not aſk for it; my ſaying is, cloſe the propoſal and lets be off, that we may have moſt for our money."

The young ladies rubbed their hands in ſilent ecſtacy at the idea, while their mother talked of her pearl-pin not being come from the

the jewellers, and that it was the moſt *provokineſt* thing not to appear a little genteel before the *Bo mund* at Deptford.

"Lord, ma'am, never mind that," ſaid Mr. Darwell, "here's a white roſe to put in your hat, 'twill do juſt as well as a pearl pin."

A loud laugh teſtified their approbation of this witticiſm, and the ladies afterwards moved different ways to dreſs, while Eloiſe retired to the room where ſhe ſlept, to avoid the troubleſome attentions of the facetious man of wealth.

In about an hour, the Smithfield belles had compleated their toilette, and were ready to move forward; a hackney coach was then called, and they drove to the tower, where they changed their vehicle for a boat.

"This is your ſort, a'nt it my girls," exclaimed the woollen-draper, looking at Eloiſe, while he ſat aſtride the ſtern of the boat.

"Lord, how you ſtare at miſs," ſaid the youngeſt Miſs Wilkins, jealous of favour not ſhewn to herſelf, "you'll put her out of countenance."

"Dear, you know "a cat may ſtare at a king," "look for love, you know, and buy for money."

Eloiſe turned away to avoid ſhewing her contempt; and converſation of the like kind paſſed till they arrived at Deptford; it, however, had one good effect, as it prevented Eloiſe's ideas reverting ſo often to her misfortunes.

After a day ſpent in the moſt vulgar conviviality, ſhe went on board the Helen and Paris, the party all choſe to eſcort her, and prevented her giving way to her feelings on taking leave of Bridget, who, ſince ſhe was ſeparated from all ſhe held dear, ſeemed to have acquired the importance of a friend.—She could only whiſper her, to bid her ſay ſome kind words to Auguſtus;—

guſtus;—that her love for him was the firſt ſtimula to her leaving the Caſtle.

Her eyes now traced the boat, as it cut the liquid way, till the diſtant ſound of the ſplaſhing of the oars, died away and were heard no longer.

The captain was a polite, well-bred Scotchman, but more like a baſhaw than the commander of a ſhip, for the men were all under arbitrary government.

The ſhip was then under way, and expected to drop down to the Downs the next day.

The next morning the cheerful note of the ſailors, while pulling the ropes, convinced Eloiſe the ſhip was going to ſail, the gentle breeze wafted them down the river, and the veſſel heaved from ſide to ſide. Eloiſe ſat on deck, liſtening to the bubling of the water, as its melancholy noiſe was congenial to her ſpirits;—her thoughts, her heart, all were at

dear

dear Beſborough, her wiſhes were now breathed for the regretted and adored inhabitants of the Caſtle;—all proſpect of happineſs to herſelf was blaſted for ever, and ſhe feared even peace was fled—never to return; ſoon, but too ſoon, ſhe might exclaim with the equally wretched Eloiſa

"Now warm in love, now withering in my bloom,
"Loſt in a convent's ſolitary gloom."

In the evening ſhe retired to her cabin, where ſhe threw herſelf on her bed, and ſhortly ſunk into a diſturbed and uneaſy ſlumber; Auguſtus preſented himſelf in viſionary phantoms before her, his mother, too, was the companion of her dreams; ſhe ſaw her, amiable, kind and affectionate as uſual, extending her hands in the morning, to her dear children, as ſhe termed her and Auguſtus,—again ſhe ſaw her weeping her departure, while Auguſtus was endeavouring to give her conſolation;—and when Eloiſe awoke in the morning, ſhe found herſelf very little refreſhed by her ſlumbers,

ſlumbers. She went on the deck, where the firſt object that greeted her eyes, were the white cliffs of Dover, as they majeſtically reared their heads above the undulating waters; ſhe thought of the words of Sheakſpeare

"Half way down hangs one that gathers ſamphire.—
"dreadful trade!"

yet even his uncertain hold on the craggy cliff ſhe envied, in compariſon with her own fate.

At Dover they took in a gentleman and his ſervant, and a lady, and theſe were the only paſſengers except Eloiſe, who were on board. She found the gentleman was going to Piſa for the recovery of his health, he was ſullen and haughty, and ſeemed to eye with ſovereign contempt his fellow voyagers.

"Alas!" exclaimed Eloiſe, ſecretly, as ſhe looked on his emaciated countenance, "thy pride will ſoon be laid low; of what avail will thy rank be, when thy mother earth ſhall receive thee; but I pity thee more than I contemn

contemn thy pride, which is more oppreſſive to yourſelf, than it ever is to others.

The next morning, when Eloiſe went on deck to take a laſt look at dear England, to her inexpreſſible ſorrow, ſhe found the blue ætherial concave terminated but by one vaſt expanſe of water; Albion was no longer to be ſeen, and her eyes, while filled with tears, were ſtrained in ardent hopes of once more ſeeing an iſle where happineſs reigned in the hearts of the people, where liberty and loyalty ſat triumphant; where no diſcord fills her breaſt, no civil factions ſap her foundation, for

"Heaven breathes bleſſings on her peaceful walls,
"And Albion flouriſhes, while Gallia falls."

Alas! all was fled, and the horizon was terminated but by the foaming waters; the vaſt Atlantic was now open to their view, and the wind being fair, the captain promiſed a ſpeedy and propitious voyage.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

LADY Caſtle Fern, as ſoon as Eloiſe was gone, gave herſelf up to deſpair, ſhe ſeemed as if ſhut out from every dear connexion, on earth, her life appeared as if a blank;—— on the return of Bridget, ſhe ſeemed to revive a little from hearing of Eloiſe; but the ſorrows ſo feelingly painted by Bridget, that ſhe experienced on parting, rendered her quite as unhappy as ſhe was before her return.

The

The loſs of her dear protegeé ſhe hourly bewailed. Once ſhe formed the idea of writing to her ſon, to let him know of the departure of Eloiſe, and entreat him to return to the Caſtle; but here aroſe new difficulties, for ſhe knew not where to direct to him, for he roved from place to place, and ſhe reſolved to truſt all to chance, (which generally directs us right,) to end the temporary exilement of Sir Auguſtus.

In the mean time he wandered, accompanied by miſery, from place to place, in ſearch of happineſs; inſtead of ſurmounting his paſſion, abſence added fuel to the fire that each day conſumed him; reſiſtance could hold out no longer, and he reſolved, however it might hurt his feelings, to gratify his wiſhes at the expence of them, and return to Beſborough, if it were only for a few hours, and then again become a wretched wanderer.

When he arrived at the bottom of the chalky hill, he diſmounted, left his horſe with the

the groom, and proceeded ſlowly up to the Caſtle, for he hoped to meet Eloiſe in the ſequeſtered wood, or the ſolitary park; when arrived at the ſhrubs that covered the paling, he ſtopt to liſten for footſteps, and a ruſtling among the leaves convinced him ſome one was at hand; his countenance was flu:ſhed with the lively expreſſion of animated expectation, he haſtened his pace, expecting to preſs the miſtreſs of his affection to his boſom, when lo! Mrs. Bridget preſented herſelf before him, and who, on beholding him, uttered a faint ſcream!———

His animation was turned into diſguſt, and expectation gave way to diſappointment, on ſeeing this antiquated maiden, who exclaimed, "Lord, Sir Auguſtus, I ſhould as ſoon thought of ſeeing the dead riſe out of their tombs, as ſeeing you."

"Tell me," ſaid he, without heeding what ſhe ſaid, "how does Eloiſe do?"

"I hope, Sir Auguſtus, ſhe is well; but ſhe has been gone this fortnight. Lord bleſs her,

her, how ſhe cried, and my Lady cried, and we all cried, for never a ſweeter tempered, better young lady broke bread, than ſhe was; when ſhe was juſt going ſhe told me to tell you ſhe ſhould love you till the end of her days;—oh! 'twould have broke your heart to ſee how ſhe took on, then too ſhe began to write twenty ſcraps of paper to you, and every time ſhe cried over them ſo that you could not read them, and ſo tore them in pieces,—and then ſhe fretted herſelf quite ſick."

Sir Auguſtus leaned himſelf againſt a tree, looking round in a kind of wild deſpair, "tell me this inſtant where ſhe is gone, and I will purſue her to the end of the world."

"God bleſs your heart, Sir, ſhe is far enough beyond your reach, why ſhe is gone to a convent in Italy, poor thing ſhe did it all for your ſake."

"Poor thing, ſhe did it all for my ſake," echoed Sir Auguſtus.

"Then"

"Then" continued Bridget, "my lady don't look the ſame thing, ſhe is worn quite to a ſhred,—all is quite dull without Miſs Eloiſe.

Mrs. Bridget might have talked to the winds with as much certainty of being attended to by them as by Sir Auguſtus; after hearing that Eloiſe was gone to Italy, the objects flitted before his ſight, he became giddy, and leaned againſt a tree for ſupport, while the Abigail, who fancied he was liſtening to her continued talking.

"Why it was a miſery to ſee her grieve ſo; but then all the French foreigners have more feeling than other people, I am ſure I know that by myſelf, for my feelings are greatly improved, ſince I went to the continent, or I never ſhould have taken on ſo about Miſs Eloiſe's going;—but bleſs me, Sir Auguſtus, you are not well, ſhall I fetch you ſome water."

This

This timely ſpeech awakened him from his reverie; he made her no anſwer, but darting by her, he ruſhed into the room where ſat Lady Caſtle Fern, bathed in tears, lamenting his abſence;—on beholding him ſhe put out her maternal arms to claſp him to her boſom, when, inſtead of ruſhing into them as uſual, with the warm embrace of filial love, he turned from her in anger.

"Could you not" ſaid he, frowning, "be contented with cruelly denying me your conſent to our union, but muſt you likewiſe, ſurreptitiouſly ſend away Eloiſe, and ruin the peace of your ſon for ever; the only latent ſpark of pleaſure that warmed my boſom was knowing that the dear Eloiſe inhabited the ſame country with myſelf;—cruelly you have abandoned her, denied her the protection you promiſed her dying parent."

His ſorrow now knew no bounds, he alternately raved like a lion, and then wept like an infant:—Lady Caſtle Fern endeavoured to

to ſooth him, but forebore to enter into an explanation of her conduct while he was ſo agitated; on his becoming calm, he told her he had not been in bed for three nights, and at length he yielded to her entreaties and went to his chamber.

The next morning ſhe went to his room, and found him in a high fever, the ſlight ſhare of reaſon he had poſſeſſed the night before, was entirely fled, his hands burnt, and his lips were parched; one minute he accuſed Eloiſe of cruelty, and reproached her for killing him; then ſoftening into tears, he would pity her hard fate, weep her woes, and accuſe his mother of ſending her privately away.

This ſcene of wretchedneſs continued a week, during which time Lady Caſtle Fern ſcarcely ever left his room, but to inhale a little freſh air, which alone enabled her to ſupport her watching in a ſick chamber:—at the end of this time *all potent* reaſon once more dawned on his mind, and the family phyſician

phyſician pronouncing him out of danger, he once more aroſe from the bed of ſickneſs, a walking ſkeleton of miſery, and the victim of deſpair.

Lady Caſtle Fern endeavoured to amuſe and entertain him; ſhe was truly conſcious how inferior her powers to pleaſe were, in compariſon with Eloiſe's, but ſhe exerted herſelf to the utmoſt: all the books of amuſement in the library ſhe read to him. Mr. Edmunds, who was almoſt a conſtant viſitor at the Caſtle, likewiſe exerted himſelf, while Sir Auguſtus, grateful for their attention, endeavoured to throw a ſmile on his emaciated countenance; but, alas, it was ſo faint, that it was ſcarcely perceptible, or entirely vaniſhed ere it lighted his languid eyes, he ſpent his time in ſecluſion and ſolitude, and all attempts to draw him into company were vain; he generally paſſed his mornings in Eloiſe's dreſſing-room, where he blended paſt felicity with preſent miſery, the contemplation of which almoſt drove him to

to madneſs; with the greateſt impatience he waited every morning for the coming in of the poſt, and each day ended in a ſevere diſappointment.

No letter arrived from Eloiſe, though ſhe promiſed to write to Lady Caſtle Fern, he tormented himſelf with the thought that ſhe was ill, or that ſhe had forgotten him, at leaſt ceaſed to love him; but ſuch a ſurmiſe was unworthy the love ſhe once bore him, and he expelled it his heart, only for others equally tormenting.

A month paſſed, ſtill no letter arrived from her, Sir Auguſtus was now merely an automaton, he walked and wept mechanically, and breathed but to heave ſighs for Eloiſe's ſafety and peace.

Sometimes Lady Caſtle Fern repented having given her promiſe to Sir Lewis, and even ſecretly accuſed him of cruelty, in contradiction of the reaſons there appeared againſt

it, yet in the midſt of theſe reflections, the ancient honour of their houſe ruſhed to her mind, and ſhe then thought him right, and could only bewail her ſevere fate, which doomed her to witneſs the laſt ſurviving heir of the houſe of Caſtle Fern, falling, like her daughter the victim of a deep rooted affection.

Every inſtant that he would permit her to be with him, was devoted to Sir Auguſtus, and when he inſiſted on being alone, ſhe with the tendereſt ſolicitude hovered round the door, leſt intenſe miſery ſhould be an incentive to ſuicide; and, though perfectly in his ſenſes, ſhe did not know what a wretched exiſtence might prompt him to do to end it.

One morning, when he was walking before that front of the Caſtle where Eloiſe had ſo often ſtrolled, his fond fancy endeavouring to call her words, her actions to his mind, he remembered the alarm ſhe had met in the ſtate-bed-chamber,—alas! it was you, my adored

adored Eloiſe, who laſt trod that room, now hallowed by your feet,—yes, it is a pleaſure to walk where you have, to breathe the ſame atmoſphere you did.

He haſtened his pace, and went to his mother for the key of the chamber, who endeavoured to diſſuade him from going, for though he ſaid it was to find out the noiſe, ſhe knew but too well his reaſons;—however, he was not to be turned aſide, and was reſolutely bent on going.

Lady Caſtle Fern gave him the key, and a faint ray of pleaſure beamed on his countenance, it was a ſervice that ſuited his melancholy mind,—he opened the door, when the ſhrieking began;—he now trembled, for ſickneſs had enervated his mind, yet he believed not in ſupernatural powers, and ſummoning reſolution, he ſprung forward, but the noiſe ceaſed; he opened one of the ſhutters, and, in a moment it became louder than before.

It ſeemed to proceed from the chimney; but before he could remove the braſs railing that always ſurrounds a bed in which royalty has ſlept, and which now, had been turned before the chimney, the room was again wrapt in ſilence, he removed the chimney board, and beheld a great quantity of mortar, that had fallen down, he turned and o'erturned it, in hopes of finding ſomething that might lead to a diſcovery, it was in part covered with ivy; but nothing could he diſcern that could make the noiſe; he was yet in deep conſideration, when the ſhrieking once more began, and putting his arm up as far as he could reach, in the chimney, he brought down the invader, while two tumbled after it.

Oh! fear, thou deſpotic tyrant, how extenſive is thy influence throughout the world? alike thou humbleſt the monarch and the peaſant! thou turneſt truth to falſhood, and often cauſes the greateſt general, when in the field to become a coward! thou ſubverteſt our reaſon, blind our judgment, while thy

transforming powers render mole-hills mountains. And you, courteous reader, have already ſeen the terror occaſioned by — what? a ſcreech owl and her young! for however your fancy might expect a man clad in armour, that would ſhake his head, and exclaim,

"Be thou the avenger of Buchan!"

or the gentle ſpirit, (but that made an ungentle noiſe) of the hapleſs Maria.———It was no more, it was no leſs, than the birds before mentioned;—the ivy had been ſuffered from time immemorial, to make ſections and interſections on that ſide the Caſtle, and in time to line the inſide of the chimney, where the feathered monſters had built their neſts.

On Lady Caſtle Fern and Eloiſe entering the room, the light, which had been ſhut out for many years, ſuddenly burſting into the chamber, alarmed the birds, and cauſed them to make that hideous noiſe.

A faint ſtream of lambent fire, for a moment illumined his eyes, when Sir Auguſtus beheld the intruder, and again locking the door, deſcended the ſtairs to his mother, with his prize, while ſhe was equally happy at having found out the wonder, for ſhe had really thought more of it than a woman of her good ſenſe ought to have done; yet it was ſo unaccountable, that though ſhe laughed at all ideas of ſupernatural agency, ſhe was ſincerely happy to have it in her power to controvert the ſtories that might have ariſen if any of the domeſtics had heard of it.

Day paſſed after day, and yet no news arrived of the regretted, the loſt Eloiſe, and each returning day's ſun roſe but to bear teſtimony to the uneaſineſs of Lady Caſtle Fern, and the wretchedneſs of Sir Auguſtus.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

MEANWHILE that theſe events had taken place at the Caſtle, Eloiſe, "heaved by the ſurge, wafted by the breeze," was borne every hour farther from dear regretted England;—but each moment her thoughts hovered more round the Caſtle, her boſom was racked when ſhe recollected what Auguſtus would ſuffer when he heard of her departure, and yet it was a ſubject, however melancholy, ſhe continually reverted to: his

laſt words ſhe ſeemed to hear in every breeze, and the fond murmur of his complaint, was wafted to her in every wind that blew.

The gentleman who was a paſſenger, continued as at firſt, ſullen and haughty, and though Eloiſe had endeavoured by politeneſs and attention to render him leſs moroſe, he ſtill kept the ſame diſtant reſerve. The female who was on board, was a pleaſant kind of gentlewoman, who was going to Italy to her miſtreſs, who was an Engliſh counteſs then reſident at Florence; and as ſhe was good-humoured and communicative, when Eloiſe's reflections were too accute to remain alone, ſhe found ſome alleviation in the friendly converſe of this gentlewoman.

The firſt week of her voyage the weather was remarkably fine, the galaxy, as each evening it ſhot along the azure concave of the heavens was, by the foretelling ſailors an augur of a propitious voyage; but their preſages were ſoon altered by the change of the moon,

moon, which brought contrary winds, with violent rains.

One evening, while the ſailors, who were moſt of them Italians, (for in a time of war the captain had had moſt of his men preſſed) were ſinging the Sicilian mariner's hymn, while the bubling waters with their reſponſive noiſe, ſeemed in uniſon with their doleful ditty, they all with one accord ſtarted up, and in broken ſentences of Italian and Engliſh, informed the captain, who was quietly ſmoaking a pipe in his cabin, that a frigate with an Engliſh jack, (though the ſagacious ſailors knew the veſſel to be French) was bearing down upon them; they immediately put out all their canvaſs and began to ſail as faſt as nearly a calm would permit.

It was now almoſt dark, and the night was paſſed in the greateſt fear and anxiety, and when morning dawned, they deſcried the frigate ſtill in purſuit of them. It chaſed them for near four hours, and at laſt came

within hearing, and desired them to strike, which the gallant captain refused to do.

The frigate then fired at her rigging, and the captain, sword in hand stood on the deck, and in a short harangue to his men entreated them to fight bravely, which they all promised they would to the last drop of their blood.

The action lasted upwards of an hour, when the English ship, having lost four of her men, and her rigging entirely shot away, they were obliged to strike. The captain, who dearly loved his ship, wept like an infant, when he saw the French captain board her, and over his English colours, place the tri-coloured flag.

Eloise, who, with the other passengers, had been put in a place of the greatest safety, when she heard the intelligence that they were taken, gave herself up for lost; for, alas! though her countrymen, she knew from their clemency

clemency ſhe ſhould receive nothing; yet her own tears of deſpair were dried in endeavouring to alliviate the diſtreſs of others, the poor woman, whoſe terror during the engagement, and ſorrow ſince, exceeded all deſcription, ſhe endeavoured by every ſoothing argument to conſole, and promiſed to ſhare with her whatever money they might leave her.

Eloiſe now thought of what her dear friends at Beſborough would ſuffer if they knew this calamity, and which Lady Caſtle Fern, though innocent, would ſeverely reproach herſelf with being the cauſe of; if then, her cruel ſenſations admitted of any palliation, it was from the recollection that they were ignorant of her misfortune.

They now traced the ſame part of the ocean they had before ſailed over, and in a few days they arrived at Dunkirk.

The ſailors, who had refuſed to man the ſhip, had been put in cloſe confinement un-

der the hatches, and when arrived at Dunkirk, were ſent to the common gaol, while their captain was put into confinement.

"Great God!" exclaimed Eloiſe, weeping, "what is to become of me," (ſeeing the captain torn away from them, and who they had conſidered as ſome protection to them) "whither, oh! whither are we going," ſaid ſhe in a tone of entreaty to the men, whoſe ſavage faces, and athletic forms, beſpoke them monſters ſcarcely human.

"You'll ſee ſoon enough," anſwered one of them with an oath that made her blood chill with horror.

"Don't complain," ſaid the man, ſeeing Eloiſe weep, "don't complain, for if you do you will be march'd into the interior part of the country," he then uttered eternal execrations againſt the Engliſh; and concluded by ſaying they hoped the war would continue till kings dropt from their thrones, like rotten pears from their tree.

Eloiſe's

Eloiſe's blood mounted to her cheeks when ſhe heard them ſpeak ſo ill of a nation whoſe late liberality to their unfortunate countrymen, and foreigners of every deſcription, exceeded the generoſity of every other; but ſhe was obliged to conceal her indignation.

They were now landed, and ſhe timidly aſked if her clothes would be given her?"

"Only a few changes, the reſt will do for our wives, who are now as big ladies as you."

Eloiſe had ſecured the picture of Auguſtus, and the ring left her by her mother, both of which ſhe concealed in her boſom, and with trembling ſteps ſhe was obliged to follow theſe monſters, with her dear little Fidel, whom ſhe wept over in unutterable anguiſh.

They now arrived at a houſe, within a pair of folding gates, ſtrongly barricaded with maſſy iron bars.

"Is

"Is this to be my place of confinement?" ſaid Eloiſe.

"No, no," anſwered a man, in whoſe countenance ferocity was written in indelible colours, we know better than to leave you at Dunkirk, when we daily expect the Engliſh to lay ſiege to it; no! to-morrow we will carry you farther off."

The gentleman who was on board the ſhip, and the poor woman were, with Eloiſe, confined in a ſmall room, whoſe windows only juſt afforded light enough to diſtinguiſh each other.

Our heroine ſpent the remainder of the day in alternately weeping and endeavouring to ſooth her companions in diſtreſs; the gentleman, with the agitation and fatigue, was ſo exhauſted, that he ſeemed as if life was at the laſt ebb, and Eloiſe every minute expected to ſee him breathe his laſt.

At

At night they threw themſelves on their mattraſſes; but alas, ſleep fled their eyes, and the ſun roſe but to witneſs their tears of affliction.

In a ſhort time the men who had conducted them to the houſe, appeared, with ſome courſe bread and ſome water; in vain Eloiſe endeavoured to eat, alas, ſhe could not ſwallow, ſhe drank a little water, which ſeemed to cool her parched throat. The men then left the room, telling them to be ready for they muſt ſoon ſet off.

In about two hours their jailors again appeared, and informed them they waited for them. Eloiſe endeavoured to riſe, but her feet failed, and ſhe fell lifeleſs to the floor: how long ſhe remained inſenſible ſhe knew not; but when ſhe recovered, ſhe found herſelf in another room, with no one in it but her dog, who was fondly licking her face.

"Oh!

"Oh! father of heaven and earth," exclaimed ſhe, looking round the apartment, "what is to become of me? where will my woes end."

The day again cloſed, and no one came to her; the dreary twilight threw a gloom ſo ſhocking round the room, as awakened all her horror, ſhe ſcarcely dared caſt her eyes up, leſt ſhe ſhould ſee ſome phantom; and ſo weakened was her mind, that once ſhe fancied ſhe ſaw ſome monſter approach, and threaten to murder her.

The waning moon now aroſe, and with her ſlanting beams, faintly played about the naked walls, when Eloiſe's imagination conjured up all manner of horrid images, and even her moving ſhadow, as ſhe mournfully walked round the forlorn place, awakened her fear and terror.

In the corner of the room was a little flock-bed, over which there was an old blanket; ſhe

ſhe lay down on it, but fear leſt any ruffian ſhould break into her room, prevented her ſleeping till towards morning, when fatigue overcame watchfulneſs, and ſhe ſunk into a diſturbed ſlumber, where horrid ſcenes floated before her ſight, and monſters of cruelty were the companions of her dreams, and at length awoke her.

After ſome time ſpent in fruitleſs conjecture, the door was opened by a man, whoſe countenance was only leſs cadaverous than her firſt attendant.

Eloiſe aſked where ſhe was to be taken to.

The man anſwered in a voice like Stentor, to a place ſome miles off, and that if it had not been for her driveling ways the day before, ſhe would have gone in the conveyance with the other priſoners, but as it was, ſhe muſt walk.

She

She made no reply, and the man telling her to be in readineſs, left her ſome bread and few broken morſels of meat.

Eloiſe ſwallowed a little of the meat, and the reſt, with the courſe bread, which her teeth refuſed to chew, ſhe gave to her almoſt famiſhed favourite, who eagerly ſeized the homely food: while ſhe was fondly watching her dear Fidel, whoſe care extended no farther than to himſelf, her jailer again entered.

"Quai? mignon!" ſaid he ſeizing the dog, "do you think you are to be fed on what your betters would be glad of? when there's hardly bread enough to ſatisfy chriſtians, are animals to be thus pampered?"

Eloiſe entreated with all her eloquence to ſpare her dog; ſhe ſupplicated, ſhe even threw herſelf on her knees to the miſcreant, and in the moſt perſuaſive accents, beſought him to ſave her favourite; the man ſeemed a wretch ſo dead to feeling, that not even the ſupplications

cations of ſo intereſting a creature as Eloiſe, could render vulnerable.

He deſired her to follow him, and going down a pair of ſtairs ſo broken and dark that ſhe expected every inſtant to fall down them, ſhe found herſelf in a narrow ſtreet.

"Voici," ſaid the wretch, to another man, equally horrid looking with himſelf, "take this *chien*, and give him a watery bath."

Eloiſe ſhreiked with agony, "Oh! great God, look down on me!"

They were deaf to her entreaties, and with her eyes filled with the ſcalding tears of miſery, ſhe followed her little favourite, whoſe cries beat reſponſive with her agony, till he was out of ſight, when ſhe appeared as if every tye was broken between her and the world, except with monſters whom ſhe bluſhed to remember were her countrymen.

Eloiſe

Eloiſe followed her conductor, bearing on her arm a little bag of linen, her only poſſeſſion, except the dear contents of her ſhagreen caſe, and one, only one, ſolitary guinea, which her mercileſs perſecutors had left her.

After walking about four miles through a country, which, from the late rains, was a perfect moraſs, ſhe was ſo fatigued, that ſhe leaned againſt an old trunk of a tree, in a wood through which they walked, for ſupport.

The man, in a ſurly tone, told her to come on; ſhe endeavoured to rally her ſpirits, and obey. Inſtead of ſinking under this laſt fierce ſpeech, as ſhe had done with the other harſh treatment ſhe had received, her fevered indignation ſeemed to gain ſtrength by oppreſſion.

Another mile was trod by her bliſtered feet, when, entirely overcome with fatigue, ſhe found herſelf under the neceſſity of petitioning him to permit her to ſit down.

This

This inhuman tyrant now found it was impoſſible for her to walk farther, and ſeeing a pedlar in a little cart, he inſiſted on his cedeing his vehicle to them. Remonſtrance from the old man, who ſeemed ſcarcely more able to walk, from age, than Eloiſe was from fatigue and weakneſs, proved of no avail, and with tears in his eyes, he lifted his *ampleties* as he termed them, from his little carriage, which our heroine was lifted into.

After travelling about three miles over a deſolate heath, whoſe ſcanty herbage ſcarcely ſupplied fodder for a few cattle that were browzing on it. Her attendant met with an acquaintance, whoſe viſage was a counterpart of his own, and who now took his ſeat beſide her.

"I think," ſaid one of the men ironically, "ſhe need not be tyed in the cart, for if ſhe isn't able to walk, *ſhe* can't eſcape."

"No, no, there's no need of the gullotine for her, for, par dieu, I believe ſhe'll ſoon die."

"I

"I wiſh I was ſure of that," ſaid Eloiſe, ſoftly, "then I ſhould end all my woes."

The mule which drew the cart, ſeemed, from fatigue, ſcarcely able to carry the weight, and from the heavineſs of the roads, barely went a mile an hour. In the afternoon they arrived at the place of deſtination, at Boulberg, which was about twelve miles from Dunkirk.

They ſtoped at a great arched gateway, over which there was a portcullis, two centi els guarded it, and who appeared to the di conſolate Eloiſe like Erebus's; after knocking at the door, whoſe reſounding noiſe made her whole frame tremble: it was opened by a huge monſter, on whoſe viſage was painted every thing cruel and tyrannical.

"What, more company?" ſaid he, viewing Eloiſe, "and an Engliſh-woman too," for her appearance was like one, "by St. Andrew, I believe ſhe will not find room here."

He

He then went in to inquire, and ſoon returned, ſaying that the Abbayé could only admit one more.

The cart now drove up a long avenue of oak and beech trees, which meeting at top, formed an arch, and almoſt ſhut out the light of heaven. They proceededſlowly, for the unevenneſs of the ground, almoſt jolted them out.

The loneline ſs of the place inſpired Eloiſe with a kind of ſuperſtitious awe, and her eyes were caſt around in anxious dread, expecting every moment to ſee ſomething (though ſhe knew not what,) ſtart from the black looking foliage.

She endeavoured to curb her dread, and to convince herſelf it was from a melancholy imagination; but horrid ideas would, in ſpite of her, intrude, and ſhe was comparatively happy when ſhe ſaw a large Gothic building before her, which the duſk of the evening dreſſed in multiplied horrors; here ſhe was lifted out of the cart, and the heavy folding doors which were thrown open, diſcovered a ſpacious

ſpacious ſtone court, paved with flag-ſtones, between each of which the graſs and dank weeds were ſhooting their noiſome heads.

Eloiſe followed the man through ſome dreary cloiſters, where

" Black melancholy ſits, and and round her throws
" A death-like ſilence, and a dead repoſe."

From them ſhe was conducted through ſeveral intricate ſtone arched paſſages, in which the faint glimmerings of light, from a ſmall iron-grated window, only ſerved to make " darkneſs viſible." They then deſcended ſome broken ſtone ſteps, to a ſubterraneous cavern, where the only light was emitted from a round hole in the centre of the top, which was grated with ſmall wires.

" Have a care," ſaid the man, " ſeeing Eloiſe ſtumbled, " you don't tumble over the bones,—many more before we've done, fine work if we loſe Dunkirk."

" Alas!" ſighed Eloiſe to herſelf, " I hope before that, I ſhall be numbered among the dead."

This monologue brought her to a door which opened into another paved court, around which was a wall whoſe towering ſummit ſeemed to reach almoſt the ſkies; the man now opened a door which led through a dark paſſage to another door, which being opened, ſhewed her ſome few people, who ſeemed equally miſerable with herſelf, ſitting over a ſcanty meal, where

"Bread of the coarſeſt ſort, with eager wine,
"Each hardly granted, ſerv'd them *all* to dine."

Eloiſe caſt her eyes on each ſad countenance, in hopes of ſeeing the woman who had been her comrade in the ſhip, and whom ſhe ſhould meet as ſome dear friend; but, alas, ſhe was not among them: ſhe threw her eyes round the room, it exemplified all the deſolation of the other things ſhe had ſeen in that depopulated country; it ſeemed to have been a chapel, for over the chimney was a large picture of the Virgin Mary, though it was ſo defaced and torn, as to al-

moſt hide the ſubject; there were other pictures that had been ſhrines for the once peaceful inhabitants of the monaſtery, who had been driven from it by the iron hand of tyranny. A fine chimney-piece of porphyry had been torn from its place, and now lay ſcattered around the room.

Eloiſe, when ſhe entered the miſerable place, looked around for a ſeat, but the chairs, which were old and few, were all occupied by the other priſoners, and ſeeing a niche, where ſome image of their idolatry had ſtood, ſhe ſat down on it.

While ſhe was muſing on her hard fate, and almoſt turning caſuiſt in its cauſe, a gentleman approached her; he appeared, when near, to be about ſix and-twenty, though at a diſtance his form ſeemed bowed down with age and miſery; his countenance was more expreſſive than handſome, and an old uniform he wore, ſhewed he had ſerved under

Engliſh banners; he bowed reſpectfully, and entreated her to take a ſeat at their miſerable table, and partake of their meal, which was alike their dinner and ſupper.

Eloiſe thanked him for his kindneſs; but begged to be excuſed: the ſtranger was politely ſolicitous, "this is not a place for compliments," ſaid he, caſting his eyes mournfully round the room.

Eloiſe aroſe, but with agitation and fatigue ſhe could ſcarcely walk; the ſtranger then led her to a ſeat, and took one on a bench next her; a little wine was all he could get her to take, for in vain ſhe endeavoured to ſwallow more ſubſtantial food.

After ſhe had ended her ſcanty beverage, ſhe endeavoured to find from what nation they were; ſhe could perceive there were but few Engliſh; many of them ſeemed, from the darkneſs of their countenances, and their

ſtrong features, to be Italians, and ſome of them French.

The door was now opened by the man who had been her conductor; all the priſoners, with one accord, roſe and left the room, the man told her to follow him, ſhe tremblingly obeyed, and went through a broad, long paſſage, with a vaulted roof, the cold damps of whoſe walls ſeemed to ſtrike to her heart; they then aſcended a narrow ſtone ſtaircaſe, the ſteps, by the ruthleſs hand of time, were broken, and almoſt perpendicular; it opened to a gallery, round which were hung pictures, repreſenting the tortures ſuffered by wicked men of the Abbayé.

She ſhuddered as ſhe heard their footſteps echoing along the gallery; ſhe endeavoured to look from the windows, but they were painted black at the bottom: after going through innumerable windings, they arrived at a door which her jailer unlocked, which was ſo low as to oblige her to ſtoop to get in at it.

" For

"For God's ſake, don't leave me here," ſaid Eloiſe, ſeeing the miſerable hole.

"What, are you afraid," ſaid the man, "to ſleep by yourſelf?—Ther's no other room for you,—firſt come, firſt ſerved, here."

He then left her, and locked the door; ſhe liſtened till the laſt faint echo of his footſteps along the ſtone paſſage, were heard no longer.

END OF VOL. III.

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